

MASTER AND MAN  
THE KREUTZER SONATA  
MISCELLANIES



C. Gopalani '90

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF  
LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

MASTER AND MAN  
THE KREUTZER  
SONATA  
MISCELLANIES



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## INTRODUCTION

WITH the exception of the fragments of the unfinished novel, "The Dekabrists," which are really studies of character, sketches to serve, and therefore suitable to place anywhere, though the scheme of the story had it been finished would have put it immediately after "War and Peace," the contents of the present volume are in accordance with Count Tolstoi's latest teaching. "Master and Man" represents selfishness conquered by self-sacrifice, and thus bringing joy even in death. It may be questioned whether the master's fear lest, in case his man perished, he should be held responsible for him, does not throw a cynical tinge over the sudden resolve of the half-dazed, half-frozen speculator to protect his servant from the snow and frost. But the lesson is almost as vital. And with what vividness the horrors of a blizzard on the steppes are portrayed.

The "Kreutzer Sonata" has probably been more misunderstood than any other of Count Tolstoi's writings. The ravings of a man self-confessed insane have been taken as the personal views of the author of the monologue. The subject is not agreeable, the narration is exasperating, the whole thing is a study in morbidity. Yet underneath the murderer's confession, underneath the insane extravagance, is the Christian teaching in regard to sexual morality. Christ's teaching is either right or wrong. There is no mincing matters, and this Count Tolstoi shows in his postscript to the "Kreutzer Sonata," the translation of which is due to Mr. Aylmer Maude of

England, whose long residence in Russia and friendship with Count Tolstoï make him an authority on his philosophy.

The several variants of Count Tolstoï's unfinished story, "Tikhon and Malanya," seem to have been committed to writing not far from the time when he was acting as Peace Arbitrator for the Krapivvsky Uyezd or District in which Tula and his own property of Yasnaya Polyana were situated. This was shortly after the Emperor Alexander II had issued the decree emancipating the serfs. It will be remembered that Tolstoï in this delicate and trying position came into collision with some of the neighboring "proprietarys" because it was thought by them that he was too much inclined to favor the peasantry in the division of the land and in the disputes that arose when the new freedmen encroached on the holdings of their former masters.

He performed his duties with exemplary fairness, but was thwarted at every turn and, finally finding that all his efforts to do the muzhiks justice were in vain, and that his life was in jeopardy, he first allowed a deputy to take his place and finally resigned it ostensibly on the ground of ill health. In his diaries of this time he complains that he had found during these months little opportunity for literary work. This probably explains why he was unable to satisfy himself with the story of peasant life which he had begun.

It is a characteristic study, as far as it goes, of the lax morals of the young men, who were permitted by their masters to go away from the estates and earn their living as drivers at the stations, and naturally caring more for the pecuniary gains possible from the sale of horses or from the tips of traveling strangers, than for their wives exposed to the temptations of other men.

As usual, when dealing with the life of the peasantry,

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Tolstoi was infallible in catching every element of their psychology. He knew how their minds worked, he was able to appreciate their attitude in the midst of their fellow men; he made perfect record of their speech. Consequently every person whom he introduced is true to his or her individuality, whether drunken or sober. Even though the tale is unfinished it contains precious sketches, delineated with vivid touches. To read it is to look into the sketchbook of a master-artist whose pencil never makes a slip. Or perhaps we might better say in this case, it is like studying an incompleted picture, parts of which are quite finished, needing no revision. One need not dwell on the author's sympathy with his subjects; he shows them to us with all their sins as well as with their particular virtues, and it is evident what moral lies under his frank disclosures. That is the Russian way, as it had to be under the old régime. The reader was left to draw his own conclusions and it was not the writer's fault if such conclusions were out of line with his.

One cannot help regretting that Count Tolstoi never found time or had the inclination to complete the many manuscripts which he began and threw aside. Time carried him on to greater works or to works which he considered far more important. We can only be grateful that these "chips from his workshop" have not been destroyed. They show Tolstoi's methods of work; they evidence the progress of his art and of his technique; they are valuable as presenting a picture of an era which has forever passed away.

Of scarcely less import is the succeeding paper "On Religious Tolerance." Here he sounds the note of the prophet—and the iconoclast. Then come a score of essays and letters, not one of which is without its interest. Nearly all of them are of theological trend. We cannot

give the bent of his mind better than by quoting once more from the author, where he takes issue with Coleridge and says: "I began by loving my orthodox faith more than my peace; then I loved Christianity more than my Church; and now I love the Truth more than anything in the world. And until now the Truth coincides for me with Christianity as I understand it; and I profess this Christianity, and in that measure in which I do profess it I peacefully and joyously live, and peacefully and joyously am approaching death."

The various translations of the Essays and Letters were in each case authorized. Mr. Aylmer Maude has had the benefit of the author's suggestions in regard to certain points. The other essays were translated by V. Tchertkoff and A. C. Fifield.

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# MASTER AND MAN

(1895)

## CHAPTER I

IT happened in the seventies, in winter, on the day after St. Nicholas' Day.<sup>1</sup> There was a holiday in the parish, and the village landowner and second-guild merchant, Vasili Andreyitch Brekhunof, could not be absent, as he had to attend church — he was a churchwarden — and receive and entertain friends and acquaintances at home.

But at last all the guests were gone, and Vasili Andreyitch began preparations for a drive over to see a neighboring landed proprietor about buying from him the forest for which they had been bargaining this long while. He was in great haste to go, so as to forestall the town merchants, who might snatch away this profitable purchase.

The youthful landowner asked ten thousand rubles for the forest, simply because Vasili Andreyitch offered seven thousand. In reality, seven thousand was but a third of the real worth of the forest. Vasili Andreyitch might, perhaps, even now make the bargain, because the forest stood in his district, and by an old standing agreement between him and the other village merchants, no one of them competed in another's territory. But Vasili Andreyitch had learned that the timber-merchants from the capital town of the province intended to bid for the Goryatchkin forest, and he decided to go at once and conclude the bargain. Accordingly, as soon as the feast was over, he took seven hundred rubles of his own

<sup>1</sup> Winter St. Nicholas' Day is December 6 (O.S.).

from the strong box, added to them twenty-three hundred belonging to the church, so as to make three thousand, and, after carefully counting the whole, he put the money into his pocket-book and made haste to be gone.

Nikita, the laborer, the only one of Vasili Andreyitch's men who was not drunk that day, ran to harness the horse. He was not drunk on this occasion, because he had been a drunkard, and now since the last day before the fast, when he spent his coat and leather boots in drink, he had sworn off and for two months had not tasted liquor. He was not drinking even now, in spite of the temptation arising from the universal consumption of alcohol during the first two days of the holiday.

Nikita was a fifty-year-old muzhik from a neighboring village; no manager,<sup>1</sup> as folk said of him, but one who lived most of his life with other people, and not at his own home. He was esteemed everywhere for his industry, dexterity, and strength, and still more for his kindness and pleasantness. But he never lived long in one place, because twice a year, or even oftener, he took to drinking; and at such times, besides spending all he had, he became turbulent and quarrelsome. Vasili Andreyitch had dismissed him several times, and afterward engaged him again; valuing his honesty and kindness to animals, but chiefly his cheapness. The merchant did not pay Nikita eighty rubles, the worth of such a man, but forty; and even that he paid without regular account, in small instalments, and mostly not in cash, but in high-priced goods from his own shop.

Nikita's wife, Marfa, a vigorous and once beautiful woman, carried on the home, with a boy almost fully grown and two girls. She never urged Nikita to live at home: first, because she had lived for about twenty years with a cooper, a muzhik from another village, who lodged with them; and secondly, because, although she treated her husband as she pleased when he was sober, she feared him like fire when he was drinking.

Once, when drunk at home, Nikita, apparently to

<sup>1</sup> *Nye khozyain.*



revenge himself for all the submissiveness he had shown his wife when sober, broke open her box, took her best clothes, and, seizing an ax, cut to shreds all her sarafans and garments. All the wages Nikita earned went to his wife, and he made no objection to this arrangement. Thus it was that Marfa, two days before the holiday, came to Vasili Andreyitch, and got from him wheat flour, tea, sugar, and a pint of vodka, — about three rubles' worth in all, — and five rubles in cash; and she thanked him as for a special favor, although, at the lowest figure, Vasili Andreyitch owed twenty rubles.

"What agreement did I make with you?" said Vasili Andreyitch to Nikita. "If you want anything, take it; you will work it out. I am not like other folks, with their delays, and accounts, and fines. We are dealing straightforwardly. You work for me, and I'll stand by you."

Talking in this way, Vasili Andreyitch was honestly convinced of his beneficence to Nikita; and he was so plausible that all those who depended on him for their money, beginning with Nikita, confirmed him in this conviction that he was not only not cheating them, but was doing them a service.

"I understand, Vasili Andreyitch; I do my best, I try to do as I would for my own father. I understand all right," answered Nikita, though he understood very well that Vasili Andreyitch was cheating him; at the same time he felt that it was useless to try to get the accounts cleared up. While there was nowhere else to go, he must stay where he was, and take what he could get.

Now, on receiving his master's orders to put the horse in, Nikita, willingly and cheerfully as always, and with a firm and easy stride, stepped to the cart-shed, took down from the nail the heavy, tasseled leather bridle, and, jingling the rings of the bit, went to the closed stable where by himself stood the horse which Vasili Andreyitch had ordered harnessed.

"Well, silly,<sup>1</sup> were you lonely, lonely?" said Nikita,

<sup>1</sup> *Durachok*, diminutive of *dura*, a fool.

in answer to the soft, welcoming whinny which greeted him from the stallion, a fairly good dark bay of medium height, with sloping quarters, who stood solitary in his stall. "No, no! Quiet, quiet, there's plenty of time! Let me give you a drink first," he went on, addressing the horse as if he were speaking to a creature which could understand human speech. With the skirt of his coat he swept down the horse's broad, double-ridged back, rough and dusty as it was; then he put the bridle on the handsome young head, arranged his ears and mane, and, throwing off the rope, led him away to drink.

Picking his way out of the dung-cumbered stall, Mukhortui began to plunge, making play with his hind foot, pretending that he wanted to kick Nikita, who was hurrying him to the well.

"Now, then, behave yourself, you rogue," said Nikita, knowing how careful Mukhortui was that the hind foot should only just touch his greasy sheepskin coat, but do no hurt; and Nikita himself especially enjoyed this sport.

After drinking the cold water, the horse drew a deep sigh, and moved his wet, strong lips, from which transparent drops fell into the trough; then, after standing a moment as if in thought, he suddenly gave a loud neigh.

"If you want no more, you need n't take it. Well, let it be at that; but don't ask again for more," said Nikita, with perfect seriousness, emphasizing to Mukhortui the consequences of his behavior. Then he briskly ran back to the shed, pulling the rein on the gay young horse, who lashed out all the way along the yard.

No other men were about, except a stranger to the place, the husband of the cook, who had come for the holiday.

"Go and ask, there's a good fellow, which sledge is wanted, the wide one or the little one," said Nikita to him.

The cook's husband went into the high-perched, iron-roofed house, and soon returned with the answer that the small one was ordered. By this time Nikita had

put on the brass-studded saddle, and, carrying in one hand the light, painted yoke, with the other hand he led the horse toward the two sledges which stood under the shed.

"All right, the small one it is," said he, backing into the shafts the intelligent horse, which all the time pretended to bite at him; and, with the help of the cook's husband, he began to harness.

When all was nearly ready, and only the reins needed attention, Nikita sent the cook's husband to the shed for straw and to the storehouse for some sacking.

"That's capital! There, there; don't bristle up so!" said Nikita, squeezing into the sledge the freshly thrashed oat straw which the cook's husband had brought. "Now give me the sacking, while we spread it out, and put the cloth over it. That's all right, just the thing, comfortable to sit on," said he, doing that which he was talking about, and making the cloth tight over the straw all round.

"Thanks, my dear fellow," said Nikita to the cook's husband. "When two work, it's done quicker."

Then, disentangling the leather reins, the ends of which were brought together and tied on a ring, he took the driver's seat on the sledge, and shook up the good horse, who stirred himself, eager to make across the frozen refuse that littered the yard, toward the gate.

"Uncle Mikit, eh, uncle!"<sup>1</sup> came a shout behind him, from a seven-year-old boy in a black fur cloak, new white felt boots, and warm cap, who came hurrying out from the entrance-hall toward the yard. "Put me in?" he asked in a shrill voice, buttoning his little coat as he ran.

"All right, come, my dove," said Nikita; and, stopping the sledge, he put in the master's son, whose face grew radiant with joy, and drove out into the road.

It was three o'clock, and cold—about ten degrees of frost—gloomy and windy. Half the sky was shrouded by a low-hanging dark cloud. In the yard it seemed quiet, but in the street the wind was more noticeable.

<sup>1</sup> *Dyadya Mikit, dyadyushka*; *dyadyushka* is diminutive of *dyadya*

The snow blew down from the roof of the barn close by, and at the corner by the baths flew whirling round. Nikita had scarcely driven out and turned round by the front door, when Vasili Andreyitch, too, with a cigarette in his mouth, wearing a sheepskin overcoat tightly fastened by a girdle placed low, came out from the entrance-hall. He strode down the trampled snow of the high steps, which creaked under his leather-trimmed felt boots, and stopped. Drawing in one final puff of smoke, he flung down his cigarette and trampled it underfoot; then, breathing out the smoke through his mustaches and critically surveying the horse, he began to turn in the corners of his overcoat collar on both sides of his ruddy face, clean-shaven, except for a mustache, so as to keep the fur clear from the moisture of his breath.

"See there! What a funny little rascal! He's all ready!" said he, as he caught sight of his little pale, thin son in the sledge. Vasili Andreyitch was excited by the wine he had taken with his guests, and was therefore more than usually satisfied with everything which belonged to him, and with everything he did. The sight of his son, whom he always in his own mind thought of as his heir, now caused him great satisfaction. He looked at him, and as he did so he smirked and showed his long teeth.

His wife, a pale and meager woman, about to become a mother, stood behind him in the entrance-hall with a woollen shawl so wrapped about her head and shoulders that only her eyes could be seen.

"Would it not be better to take Nikita with you?" she asked, timidly stepping out from the door.

Vasili Andreyitch made no reply, but merely spat, scowling angrily at her words, which evidently were disagreeable to him.

"You have money with you," the wife continued, in the same plaintive voice. "What if the weather should get worse! Be careful, for God's sake."

"Do you think I don't know the road, that I need a guide?" retorted Vasili Andreyitch, with that affected compression of the lips with which he ordinarily

addressed dealers in the market, and bringing out every syllable with extraordinary precision, as if he valued his own speech.

"Really, I would take him. I beg of you, for God's sake!" repeated his wife, folding her shawl closer.

"Just listen! She sticks to it like a leaf in the bath! .... Why, where must I take him to?"

"Well, Vasili Andreyitch, I'm ready," said Nikita, cheerfully. "If I'm away, there are only the horses to be fed," he added, turning to his mistress.

"I'll look after that, Nikitushka; I'll tell Semyon," answered the mistress.

"Well, then, shall I come, Vasili Andreyitch?" asked Nikita, waiting.

"It seems we must have some regard for the old woman. But if you come, go and put on something warmer," said Vasili Andreyitch, smiling once more, and winking at Nikita's sheepskin coat, which was torn under the arms and down the back, and soiled and patched and frayed into fringes round the skirts.

"Hey, dear soul, come and hold the horse awhile!" shouted Nikita to the cook's husband, in the yard.

"I'll hold him myself," said the little boy, taking his half-frozen red hands out of his pockets, and seizing the cold leather reins.

"Only don't be too long putting your best coat<sup>1</sup> on! Be quick!" shouted Vasili Andreyitch, grinning at Nikita.

"In a breath, batyushka, Vasili Andreyitch!" said Nikita, and, with his trousers stuffed into his old patched felt boots, he swiftly ran down the yard to the laborers' quarters.

"Here, Arinushka,<sup>2</sup> give me my khalat off the oven. I have to go with the master!" said Nikita, hastening into the room, and taking his girdle down from the nail.

The cook, who had just finished her after-dinner nap, and was about to get ready the samovar for her husband, turned cheerily to Nikita, and, catching his haste, moved

<sup>1</sup> He calls it a *diplomat*.

<sup>2</sup> Diminutive of Arina, popular form of Irina, Irene.

about quickly, just as he was doing, took the well-worn woolen khalat off the oven, where it was drying, and shook and rubbed it.

"There now, you'll have a chance to spread and have a good time with your husband here," said Nikita to the cook; always, as part of his good-natured politeness, ready to say something to any one whom he came across.

Then, putting round himself the narrow shrunken girdle, he drew in his breath and tightened it about his spare body as much as he could.

"There," he said afterward, addressing himself, not to the cook, but to the girdle, while tucking the ends under his belt, "this way, you won't jump out." Then, working his shoulders up and down to get his arms loose, he put on the khalat, again stretching his back to free his arms, and poked up under his sleeves and took his mittens from the shelf.

"Now, we're all right."

"You ought to change your boots," said the cook, "those boots are very bad."

Nikita stopped, as if remembering something.

"Yes, I ought. .... But it will go as it is; it's not far." And he ran out into the yard.

"Won't you be cold, Nikitushka?" said his mistress, as he came up to the sledge.

"Why should I be cold? It is quite warm," answered Nikita, arranging the straw in the fore part of the sledge, so as to bring it over his legs, and stowing under it the whip which the good horse would not need.

Vasili Andreyitch had already taken his place in the sledge, almost filling up the whole of the curved back with the bulk of his body wrapped in two shubas; and, taking up the reins, he started at once. Nikita jumped in, seating himself in front, to the left, and hanging one leg over the side.

## CHAPTER II

THE good stallion took the sledge along at a brisk pace, over the smooth frozen road through the village; the runners creaking faintly as they went.

"Look at him there, hanging on! Give me the whip, Mikita," shouted Vasili Andreyitch, evidently enjoying the sight of his boy holding to the sledge-runners, behind. "I'll give it to you! Run to your mamma, you young dog!"

The boy jumped off. Mukhortui began to pace and then, getting his breath, broke into a trot.

Krestui, the village where Vasili Andreyitch lived, consisted of six houses. Scarcely had they passed the blacksmith's izba, the last in the village, when they suddenly remarked that the wind was much stronger than they had thought. The road was by this time scarcely visible. The tracks of the sledge were instantly covered with snow, and the road was to be distinguished only by the fact that it was higher than anything else. There was a whirl of snow over the fields, and the line where the earth and sky join could not be distinguished. The Telyatin forest, always plainly in sight, loomed dimly through the driving snow-dust. The wind came from the left hand, persistently blowing to one side the mane on Mukhortui's powerful neck, turning away even his knotted tail, and pressing Nikita's high collar—he sat on the windward side—against his face and nose.

"There is no chance of showing his speed, with this snow," said Vasili Andreyitch, proud of his good horse. "I once went to Pashutino with him, and we got there in half an hour."

"What?" said Nikita, who could not hear on account of his collar.

"Pashutino, I said; and he did it in half an hour," shouted Vasili Andreyitch.

"A good horse that, no question," said Nikita.

They became silent. But Vasili Andreyitch wanted to talk.

"Say, I suppose you tell your wife<sup>1</sup> not to give any drink to the cooper?" said Vasili Andreyitch in the same loud voice, being perfectly convinced that Nikita must feel flattered, talking with such an important and sensible man as himself, and he was so pleased with his jest that it never entered his head that the subject might be unpleasant to Nikita.

Again the man failed to catch his master's words, the voice being carried away by the wind.

Vasili Andreyitch, in his loud clear voice, repeated the jest about the cooper.

"God help them, Vasili Andreyitch, I don't meddle in these matters. I only hope that she does no harm to the lad; if she does — then God help her!"

"That is right," said Vasili Andreyitch. "Well, are you going to buy a horse in the spring?" Thus he began a new topic of conversation.

"Yes, I must buy one," answered Nikita, turning aside the collar of his kaftan, and leaning toward his master. Now the conversation became interesting to him, and he did not wish to lose a word.

"My lad is grown up, he must plow for himself, but now he is hired out all the time," said he.

"Well, then, take the horse with the thin loins; the price will not be high," shouted Vasili Andreyitch, feeling himself excited and consequently eagerly entering into his favorite business of horse-dealing, to which he gave all his intellectual powers.

"You give me fifteen rubles, and I'll buy in the market," said Nikita, who knew that at the highest price the horse which Vasili Andreyitch called "*Bezkestretchnui*" and wanted to sell him, was not worth more than seven rubles, but would cost him at his master's hands twenty-five; and that meant half a year's wages gone.

"The horse is a good one. I treat you as I would myself. Conscientiously. Brekhunof injures no man. Let me stand the loss, and me only. Honestly," he shouted in the voice which he used in cheating<sup>2</sup> his customers, "a genuine horse."

<sup>1</sup> *Khozyaika*.

<sup>2</sup> *Zagovarivat' zubui*, "talk the teeth out."



"As you think," said Nikita, sighing, and convinced that it was useless to listen further; and he again drew the collar over his ear and face.

They drove in silence for about half an hour. The wind cut sharply into Nikita's side and arm, where his shuba was torn. He huddled himself up and breathed into his coat-collar, which covered his mouth; and so he was not wholly cold!

"What do you think; shall we go through Karamuishevo, or keep the straight road?" said Vasili Andreyitch.

The road through Karamuishevo was more frequented, and staked on both sides; but it was longer. The straight road was nearer, but it was little used, and either there were no stakes, or they were poor ones left standing covered with snow.

Nikita thought awhile.

"Through Karamuishevo is farther, but it is better going," he said.

"But straight on, we have only to be careful not to lose the road in passing the little valley, and then the way is fairly good, sheltered by the forest," said Vasili Andreyitch, who favored the direct road.

"As you wish," replied Nikita, and again he rolled up his collar.

So Vasili Andreyitch took this way, and after driving about half a verst, he came to a place where there was a long oak branch which shook in the wind, and to which a few dry leaves were clinging, and there he turned to the left.

On turning, the wind blew almost directly against them, and the snow showered from on high. Vasili Andreyitch stirred up his horse, and inflated his cheeks, blowing his breath upon his mustaches. Nikita dozed.

They drove thus silently for about ten minutes. Suddenly Vasili Andreyitch began to say something.

"What?" asked Nikita, opening his eyes.

Vasili Andreyitch did not answer, but bent himself about, looking behind them, and then ahead of the horse. The sweat had curled the animal's coat on the groin and neck, and he was going at a walk.

"I say, what's the matter?" repeated Nikita.

"What is the matter?" mocked Vasili Andreyitch, irritated. "I see no stakes. We must be off the road."

"Well, pull up then, and I will find the road," said Nikita, and lightly jumping down, he drew out the whip from the straw and started off to the left, from his own side of the sledge.

The snow was not deep that season, so that one could travel anywhere, but in places it was up to one's knee, and got into Nikita's boots. He walked about, feeling with his feet and the whip, but no road was to be found.

"Well?" said Vasili Andreyitch, when Nikita returned to the sledge.

"There is no road on this side. I must try the other."

"There's something dark there in front. Go and see what it is," said Vasili Andreyitch.

Nikita walked ahead; got near the dark patch; and found it was black earth which the wind had strewn over the snow, from some fields of winter wheat. After searching to the right also, he returned to the sledge, shook the snow off himself, cleared his boots, and took his seat.

"We must go to the right," he said decidedly. "The wind was on our left before, now it is straight in my face. To the right," he repeated, with the same decision.

Vasili Andreyitch heeded him and turned to the right. But yet no road was found. He drove on in this direction for some time. The wind did not diminish, and the snow still fell.

"We seem to be astray altogether, Vasili Andreyitch," suddenly exclaimed Nikita, as if he were announcing some pleasant news. "What is that?" he said, pointing to some black potato-leaves, which thrust themselves through the snow.

Vasili Andreyitch stopped the horse, which by this time was in a heavy perspiration and stood with its deep sides heaving.

"What can it mean?" asked he.

"It means that we are on the Zakharovsky lands. Why, we are ever so far astray!"

"You lie!" remarked Vasili Andreyitch.

"I am not lying, Vasili Andreyitch; it is the truth," said Nikita. "You can feel that the sledge is moving over a potato-field, and there are the heaps of old leaves. It is the Zakharovsky factory-land."

"What a long way we are out!" said Vasili Andreyitch. "What are we to do?"

"Go straight ahead, that's all. We shall reach some place," said Nikita. "If we do not get to Zakharovka, we shall come out at the owner's farm."

Vasili Andreyitch assented, and let the horse go as Nikita had said. They drove in this way for a long while. At times they passed over winter wheat fields all bare, and the sledge creaked over the humps of frozen soil. Sometimes they passed a stubble-field, sometimes a corn-field, where they could see the upstanding worm-wood and straw beaten by the wind; sometimes they drove into deep and even white snow on all sides, with nothing visible above it.

The snow whirled down from on high, and sometimes seemed to rise up from below. The horse was evidently tiring; his coat grew crisp and white with frozen sweat, and he walked. Suddenly he stumbled in some ditch or water-course, and went down. Vasili Andreyitch wanted to halt, but Nikita cried to him:—

"Why should we stop? We have gone astray, and we must find our road. Hey, old fellow, hey," he shouted in an encouraging voice to the horse; and he jumped from the sledge, sinking into the ditch.

The horse dashed forward, and quickly landed upon a frozen heap. Obviously it was a made ditch.

"Where are we, then?" said Vasili Andreyitch.

"We shall see," answered Nikita. "Go ahead, we shall get to somewhere."

"Is not that the Goryatchkin forest?" asked Vasili Andreyitch, pointing out a dark mass which showed across the snow in front of them.

"When we get nearer, we shall see what forest it is," said Nikita.

He noticed that from the side of the dark mass, long, dry willow leaves were fluttering toward them; and so he knew that it was no forest, but a settlement; yet he chose not to say so. And, in fact, they had scarcely gone twenty-five yards beyond the ditch, when they distinctly made out the trees, and heard a new and melancholy sound. Nikita was right; it was not a forest but a row of tall willow trees, whereon a few scattered leaves still shivered. The willows were evidently ranged along the ditch of a threshing-floor. Coming up to the trees, through which the wind moaned and sighed, the horse suddenly planted his forefeet above the height of the sledge, then drew up his hind legs after him, turned to the left and leaped, sinking up to his knees in the snow. It was a road.

"Here we are," said Nikita, "but I don't know where."

The horse without erring ran along the snow-covered road, and they had not gone eighty yards when they saw the straight strip of a wattled fence, from which the snow was flying in the wind. Passing under a deeply drifted roof of a granary, the road turned in the direction of the wind, and brought them upon a snowdrift. But ahead of them was a passage between two houses; the drift was merely blown across the road, and had to be crossed. Indeed, after passing the drift, they came into a village street. In front of the end house of the village, the wind was shaking desperately the frozen linen which hung there: shirts, one red, one white, some leg-cloths, and a skirt. The white shirt especially shook frantically, tugging at the sleeves.

"Look there, either a lazy woman or a dead one left her linen out over the holiday," said Nikita, seeing the fluttering shirts.

## CHAPTER III

AT the beginning of the street, the wind was still fierce, and the road was snow-covered; but well within the village, it was calm, warm, and cheerful. At one house a dog was barking; at another, a woman, with a sleeveless coat over her head, came running out from somewhere, and stopped at the door of an izba to see who was driving past. In the middle of the village could be heard the sound of girls singing.

Here, in the village, the wind and the snow and the frost seemed subdued.

"Why, this is Grishkino," said Vasili Andreyitch.

"It is," said Nikita.

Grishkino it was. So they had strayed eight versts too far to the left, and traveled out of their proper direction; still, they had got somewhat nearer to their destination. From Grishkino to Goryatchkino was about five versts more.

In the middle of the village they almost ran into a tall man, walking in the center of the road.

"Who is driving?" said this man, and he held the horse. Then, recognizing Vasili Andreyitch, he took hold of the shaft, and reached the sledge, where he sat himself on the driver's seat.

It was the muzhik Isaï, well known to Vasili Andreyitch, and known throughout the district as the most notorious horse-thief.

"Ah, Vasili Andreyitch, where is God sending you?" said Isaï, from whom Nikita caught the smell of vodka.

"We are going to Goryatchkino."

"You've come a long way round! You should have gone through Malakhovo."

"Should have' is good, but we got astray," said Vasili Andreyitch, pulling up.

"A good horse," said Isaï, examining him, and dexterously tightening the loosened knot in his thick tail "Are you going to stay the night here?"

"No, friend, we must go on."

"Your business must be pressing. And who is that? Ah, Nikita Stepanuich!"

"Who else?" answered Nikita. "Look here, good friend, can you tell us how not to miss the road again?"

"How can you possibly miss it? Just turn back straight along the street, and then outside the houses; keep straight ahead. Don't go to the left. When you reach the highroad, then turn to the right."

"And which turning do we take out of the highroad — the summer or the winter road?" asked Nikita.

"The winter road. As soon as you get clear of the village there are some bushes, and opposite them is a way-mark, an oaken one, all branches. There is the road."

Vasili Andreyitch turned the horse back, and drove through the village.

"You had better stay the night," Isaï shouted after them. But Vasili Andreyitch did not answer, and started up the horse; five versts of smooth road, two versts of it through the forest, was easy enough to drive over, especially as the wind seemed quieter and the snow had apparently ceased falling.

After once more passing along the street, darkened and trodden with fresh horse-tracks, and after passing the house where the linen was hung out, — the white shirt was by this time torn, and hung by one frozen sleeve, — they came to the weirdly moaning and sighing willows, and then were again in the open country.

Not only had the snow-storm not ceased, but it seemed to have gained strength. The whole road was under snow, and only the stakes proved that they were keeping right. But even these signs of the road were difficult to make out, for the wind blew straight into their faces.

Vasili Andreyitch screwed up his eyes, and bent his head, examining the way-marks; but for the most part, he left the horse alone, trusting to his sagacity. And, in fact, the creature went truly, turning now to the left, now to the right, along the windings of the road which he sensed under his feet. So that in spite of the thickening snow

and strengthening wind, the way-marks were still to be seen, now on the left, now on the right.

They had driven thus for ten minutes, when suddenly, straight in front of their horse, appeared a black object moving through the obliquely flying whirlwind of snow. It was a party of travelers. Mukhortui had overtaken them, and he struck his forefeet against the cross-bar of their sledge.

"Drive round! .... a-a-ı! .... Go ahead!" cried voices from the sledge.

Vasili Andreyitch started to go round them. In the sledge were four peasants, three men and a woman, evidently returning from a festival visit. One of the men was whipping the snow-plastered rump of their little horse with a switch, while two of them, waving their arms from the fore part of the sledge, shouted out something. The woman, muffled up and covered with snow, sat quiet and rigid at the back.

"Where are you from?" asked Vasili Andreyitch.

"A-a-a-skiye!" was all that could be heard.

"I say, where are you from?"

"A-a-a-skiye!" shouted one of the peasants, with all his strength; but nevertheless it was impossible to make out the name.

"Go on! don't give up!" cried another, the one who kept beating his poor little horse.

"So you have come from the festival, have you?"

"Get on! get on! Up, Semka! drive round! Up, up!"

The sledges struck together, almost locked their sides, then fell apart, and the peasants' sledge began to drop behind.

The shaggy, snow-covered, big-bellied pony, laboriously breathing under the duga-bow, and evidently at the end of his strength in his vain efforts to escape from the switch belaboring him, staggered along on his short legs through the deep snow, which he trod down with difficulty. With distended nostrils, and ears set back in distress, and with his lower lip stuck out like a fish's, he kept his muzzle near Nikita's shoulder for a moment; then he began to fall behind.

"See what drink does," said Nikita. "They have tired that horse to death. What heathens!"<sup>1</sup>

For a few minutes, the pantings of the tired-out horse could be heard, with the drunken shouts of the peasants. Then the pantings became inaudible, and the shouts, also. Again nothing could be heard round about except the wind whistling in their ears, and the occasional scrape of the sledge-runners on a bare spot of road.

This encounter enlivened and encouraged Vasili Andreyitch, and he drove more boldly, not examining the way-marks, and again trusting to his horse.

Nikita had nothing to occupy him, and dozed just as he always did in such circumstances, thus wasting much good daylight. Suddenly the horse stopped, and Nikita was jerked forward, knocking his nose against the front.

"It seems we are going wrong again," said Vasili Andreyitch.

"What is the matter?"

"The way-marks are not to be seen. We must be out of the road."

"Well, if we've lost the road, we must look for it," said Nikita, laconically; and again stepping easily in his great bark overshoes, he started out to explore the snow.

He walked for a long time, now out of sight, now re-appearing, then disappearing; at last, he returned.

"There is no road here; it may be farther on," said he, sitting down in the sledge.

It was already beginning to grow dark. The storm was neither increasing, nor did it diminish.

"I should like to hear those peasants again," said Vasili Andreyitch.

"Yes, but they won't pass near us; we must be a good distance off the road. Maybe they are astray, too," said Nikita.

"Where shall we make for, then?"

"Leave the horse to himself. He will find his way. Give me the reins."

<sup>1</sup> *Anatui kak yest'*, like Asiatics.



Vasili Andreyitch handed over the reins; the more willingly because his hands, in spite of his warm gloves, were beginning to freeze.

Nikita took the reins, and held them lightly, trying to give no pressure; he was glad to prove the good sense of his favorite. And in fact, the intelligent horse, turning one ear and then the other, first in this and then in that direction, presently began to wheel round.

"He just doesn't speak," said Nikita. "Look how he manages it! Go on, go on, that's good."

The wind was now at their backs; they felt warmer.

"Is he not wise?" continued Nikita, delighted with his horse. "A Kirghiz beast is strong, but stupid. But this one, — see what he does with his ears. There is no need of a telegraph-wire; he can feel through a mile."

Hardly half an hour had gone, when a forest, or a village, or something, loomed up in front; and, to their right, the way-marks again showed. Evidently they were on the road again.

"We are back at Grishkino, are we not?" exclaimed Nikita, suddenly.

Indeed, on the left hand rose the same granary, with the snow flying from it; and farther on was the same line with the frozen washing — the shirts and drawers, so fiercely shaken by the wind.

Again they drove through the street, again felt the quiet, warmth, and cheerfulness, again saw the road with the horse-tracks; heard voices, songs, the barking of a dog. It was now so dark that a few windows were lighted.

Halfway down the street, Vasili Andreyitch turned the horse toward a large two-storied brick house, and drew up at the steps.

Nikita went to the snow-dimmed window, in the light from which glittered the flitting flakes, and knocked with the handle of the whip.

"Who is there?" a voice answered to his knock.

"The Brekhunofs, from Krestui, my good man," answered Nikita. "Come out for a minute."

Some one moved from the window, and in about two

minutes the door in the entrance-hall was heard to open, the latch of the front door clicked, and holding the door against the wind, there peeped out a tall, old, white-bearded muzhik, who had thrown a sheepskin coat over his white holiday shirt. Behind him was a young fellow in a red shirt and leather boots.

"What, is it you, Andreyitch?" said the old man.

"We have lost our road, friend," said Vasili Andreyitch. "We set out for Goryatchkino, and found ourselves here. Then we went on, but lost the road again."

"Why, how you 've wandered!" answered the old man. "Petrushka, go, open the gates," he said to the young man in the red shirt.

"Of course I will," said the young fellow, cheerfully, as he ran off through the entrance-hall.

"We are not stopping for the night, friend," said Vasili Andreyitch.

"Where can you go in the night-time? You had better stop."

"Should be very glad to spend the night, but I must go on business, friend; it's impossible!"

"Well, then, at least warm yourself a little; the samovar is just ready," said the old man.

"Warm ourselves? We can do that," said Vasili Andreyitch. "It cannot get darker, and when the moon is up, it will be still lighter. Come, Mikit, let us go in and warm up a bit."

"Why, yes, let us warm ourselves," said Nikita, who was very cold, and whose great desire was to thaw out his benumbed limbs in a well-heated room.

Vasili Andreyitch went with the old man into the house. Nikita drove through the gates opened by Petrushka, by whose advice he stood the horse under the pent-roof of the shed, the floor of which was strewn with stable-litter. The high duga-bow caught the roof-beam, and the hens and a cock, already gone to roost up there, began to cackle angrily and scratch on the wood. Some startled sheep, pattering their feet on the frozen dung-heap, huddled themselves out of the way. A dog yelped

desperately in fright, after the manner of young hounds, and barked fiercely at the stranger.

Nikita held conversation with them all. He begged pardon of the fowls, and calmed them with assurances that he would give them no more trouble; he reproved the sheep for being needlessly frightened; and while fastening up the horse, he kept on exhorting the little dog.

"That will do," said he, shaking the snow from himself. "Hear, how he is barking!" added he, for the dog's benefit. "That's quite enough for you, quite enough, stupid! That will do! Why do you bother yourself? There are no thieves or strangers about."

"It is like the tale of the Three Domestic Counselors," said the young man, thrusting the sledge under the shed with his strong arms.

"What about the counselors?"

"The tale is in P'ulson. A thief sneaks up to a house; the dog barks,—that means 'Be on your guard; ' the cock crows,—that means 'Get up; ' the cat washes itself,—that means 'A welcome guest is coming, be ready for him,' " said the young man, with a smile.

Petrukha could read and write, and knew, almost by heart, the only book he possessed, which was Paulson's primer; and he liked, especially when, as now, he had been drinking a little too much, to quote from the book some saying which seemed appropriate to the occasion.

"Quite true," said Nikita.

"I suppose you are cold, uncle," said Petrukha.

"Yes, something that way," said Nikita. They both crossed the yard and entered the house.

## CHAPTER IV

THE house at which Vasili Andreyitch had drawn up was one of the richest in the village. The family had five allotments of land, and hired still more outside. Their establishment owned six horses, three cows, two yearling heifers, and twenty head of sheep. In the

house lived twenty-two souls; four married sons, six grandchildren (of whom one, Petrukha, was married), two great-grandchildren, three orphans, and four daughters-in-law with their children. It was one of the few families, living together in one household; yet even here was that indefinable interior work of disintegration, — beginning, as usual, among the women, — infallibly bound to bring about speedy separation. Two sons were water-carriers in Moscow; one was in the army. At present, those at home were the old man, his wife, the second son who was manager<sup>1</sup> of the house, the oldest son who had come from Moscow on a holiday, and all the women and children. Besides the family there was a guest, a neighbor, who was an intimate friend.

Over the table in the living-room hung a shaded lamp, which threw a bright light down on the tea-service, a bottle of vodka, and some eatables, and on the brick walls, where, in the "red corner," hung the ikons with pictures on each side of them.

At the head of the table sat Vasili Andreyitch, in his black fur coat, sucking his frozen mustaches, and scrutinizing the people and the room with his bulging, hawk-like eyes. Beside him at the table sat the white-bearded, bald, old father of the house, in a white homespun shirt; next him sat the son from Moscow, with his sturdy back and shoulders, clad in a thin cotton shirt; then the other son, the broad-shouldered eldest brother, who acted as head of the house; then a lean and red-haired muzhik — the visiting neighbor.

The muzhiks, having drunk and eaten, prepared to take tea, and the samovar was already boiling as it stood on the floor near the oven. The children were to be seen on the oven and on sleeping-shelves. On the wall bench sat a woman with a cradle beside her. The aged mother of the house, whose face was covered with a network of fine wrinkles even to the lips, waited on Vasili Andreyitch.

As Nikita entered the room, she was just filling a

<sup>1</sup> *Khozyaïn.*

coarse glass with vodka, and handing it to Vasili Andreyitch.

"No harm done, Vasili Andreyitch, but you must wish our good health," said she. "Have a drink, dear!"

The sight and smell of vodka, especially in his cold and tired condition, greatly disturbed Nikita's mind. He frowned, and after shaking the snow from his kaftan and hat, stood before the holy images: without apparently seeing any one, he made the sign of the cross thrice, and bowed to the images; then, turning to the old man, he bowed to him first, afterward to all who sat at table, and again to the women beside the oven; and saying, "Good fortune to your feast," he began to take off his overcoat without looking at the table.

"Why, you are all over frost, uncle," said the eldest brother, looking at the snow which crowned Nikita's face, eyes, and beard.

Nikita took off his kaftan, shook it again, hung it near the oven, and came to the table. They offered him vodka also. There was a moment's bitter struggle; he came very near taking the glass and pouring the fragrant, transparent liquid into his mouth, but he looked at Vasili Andreyitch, remembered his vow, remembered the lost boots, the cooper, his son for whom he had promised to buy a horse when the spring came; he sighed, and refused.

"I don't drink, thank you humbly," he said gloomily, and sat down on the bench, near the second window.

"Why not?" asked the eldest brother.

"I don't drink, that's all," said Nikita, not daring to raise his eyes, and looking at his thin beard and mustache, and at the thawing icicles clinging to them.

"It is not good for him," said Vasili Andreyitch, munching a biscuit after emptying his glass.

"Then have some tea," said the kindly old woman. "I dare say you are quite benumbed, good soul. How lazy you women are with the samovar!"

"It is ready," answered the youngest, and wiping round the samovar with an apron, she bore it heavily to the table, and set it down with a thud.

Meanwhile, Vasili Andreyitch told how they had gone astray and worked back twice to the same village; what mistakes they had made, and how they had met the drunken peasants. Their hosts expressed surprise, showed why and where they had missed the road, told them the names of the revelers they had met, and made plain how they ought to go.

"From here to Molchanovka, a child might go; the only thing is to make sure where to turn out of the high-road; you'll see a bush there. But yet you did not get there," said the neighbor.

"You ought to stop here. The women will make up a bed," said the old woman, persuasively.

"You would make a better start in the morning; much pleasanter, that," said the old man, affirming what his wife had said.

"Impossible, friend! Business!" said Vasili Andreyitch. "If you let an hour go, you may not be able to make it up in a year," added he, remembering the forest and the dealers who might do him out of his purchase. "We shall get there, shan't we?" he said, turning to Nikita.

"We may lose ourselves again," said Nikita, gloomily. He was gloomy, because of the intense longing he felt for the vodka; and the tea, the only thing which could quench that longing, had not yet been offered to him.

"We have only to reach the turning, and there is no more danger of losing the road, as it goes straight through the forest," said Vasili Andreyitch.

"Just as you say, Vasili Andreyitch; if you want to go, let us go," said Nikita, taking the glass of tea offered to him.

"Well, let us drink up our tea, and then forward march!"

Nikita said nothing, but shook his head; and carefully pouring the tea into the saucer, began to warm his hands and his swollen fingers over the steam. Then, taking a small bite of sugar in his mouth, he turned to their hosts, said, "Your health," and drank down the warming liquid.

"Could n't some one come with us to the turning?" asked Vasili Andreyitch.

"Why not? Certainly," said the eldest son. "Petrukha will put in the horse, and go with you as far as the turning."

"Then put in your horse, and I shall be in your debt."

"My dear man," said the kindly old woman, "we are right glad to do it."

"Petrukha, go and put in the mare," said the eldest son.

"All right," said Petrukha, smiling; and, without delay, taking his cap from the nail, he hurried away to harness up.

While the harnessing was in progress, the talk turned back to the point where it stood when Vasili Andreyitch arrived. The old man had complained to his neighbor, the village-elder, about the conduct of his third son, who had sent him no present this holiday-time, though he had sent a French shawl to his wife.

"These young folk are getting worse and worse," said the old man.

"Very much worse!" said the neighbor. "They are unmanageable. They know too much. There's Demotchkin, now, who broke his father's arm. It all comes from too much learning."

Nikita listened, watched the faces, and it was evident that he, too, would like to have a share in the conversation, had he not been so busy with his tea; as it was, he only nodded his head approvingly. He emptied glass after glass, growing warmer and warmer, and more and more comfortable. The talk continued in one strain, all about the harm that comes from family division; and it was clearly no theoretical discussion, but concerned with a rupture in this very house, arising through the second son, who sat there in his place, morosely silent. The question was a painful one, and absorbed the whole family; but out of politeness they refrained from discussing their private affairs before strangers.

At last, however, the old man could endure it no longer. In a tearful voice, he began to say that there should be no break-up of the family while he lived; that the house had much to thank God for, but if they fell apart—they must become beggars.

"Just like the Matveyefs," said the neighbor. "There was plenty among them all, but when they broke up the family, there was nothing for any of them."

"That's just what you want to do," said the old man to his son.

The son answered nothing, and there was a painful pause. The silence was broken by Petrukha, who had by this time harnessed the horse and returned to the room, where he had been standing for a few minutes, smiling all the time.

"There is a tale in P'ulson, just like this," said he. "A father gave his sons a broom to break. They could not break it while it was bound together, but they broke it easily by taking every switch by itself. That's the way here," he said, with his broad smile. "All's ready!" he added.

"Well, if we're ready, let us start," said Vasili Andreyitch. "As to this quarrel, don't you give in, grandfather. You got everything together, and you are the master. Apply to the magistrate; he will show you how to keep your authority."

"And he gives himself such airs, such airs," continued the old man, in his complaining voice. "There is no ordering him! It is as if Satan lived in him."

Meanwhile, Nikita, having drunk his fifth glass of tea, did not stand it upside down, in sign that he had finished, but laid it on its side, hoping they might fill it a sixth time. But there was no longer any water in the samovar, and the hostess did not fill up for him again, and then Vasili Andreyitch began to put on his things. There was no help; Nikita also rose, put back into the sugar-basin the little lump of sugar, which he had nibbled on all sides, wiped the moisture from his face with the skirt of his coat, and went to put on his khalat.

After getting into the garment, he sighed heavily.



then, having thanked their hosts and said good-by, he went out from the warm, bright room, and through the dark, cold entrance-hall, where the wind creaked the doors and drove the snow in at the chinks, into the dark yard.

Petrukha, in his shuba, stood in the center of the yard with the horse, and smiling recited verses from Paulson :—

*Storm-clouds veil the sky with darkness,  
Swiftly whirl the snowblasts wild,  
Now the storm roars like a wild beast,  
Now it waileth like a child.*<sup>1</sup>

Nikita nodded appreciatively, and arranged the reins.

The old man, coming out with Vasili Andreyitch, brought a lantern into the entry, and was going to show the way ; but the wind put it out at once. Even in the inclosed yard, one could see that the storm had become much more violent.

“What weather !” thought Vasili Andreyitch. “I’m afraid we shall not get there. But it must be ! Business ! And then, I have put our friend to the trouble of harnessing his horse. God helping, we shall get there.”

Their aged host also thought it better not to go ; but he had offered his arguments already, and they had not listened to him. It was useless to ask them again.

“Maybe it is old age makes me overcautious ; they will get there all right,” thought he. “And we can all go to bed at proper time. It will be less bother.”

As for Petrukha, he had no thought of danger : he knew the way so well and the whole region, and then besides, the lines about “the snowblasts wild” encouraged him, because they were a quite true description of what was going on out-of-doors. Nikita had no wish to go at all ; but he was long used to follow other people’s wishes, and to give up his own. Therefore no one withheld the travelers.

<sup>1</sup> This is rendered in rude fashion by Petrukha. The Russian poem given in Paulson is by Pushkin.

## CHAPTER V

VASIL ANDREYITCH went over to his sledge, found it with some difficulty in the darkness, got in, and took the reins.

"Go ahead!" he shouted.

Petrukha, kneeling in his sledge, started the horse. Mukhortui, who had before been whinnying, aware of the mare's nearness, now dashed after her, and they drove out into the street. They rode once more through the village, down the same road, past the space where the frozen linen had hung, but was no longer to be seen; past the same barn, now snowed-up almost as high as the roof, from which the snow flew incessantly; past the moaning, whistling, and bending willows; and again they came to where the sea of snow raged from above and below. The wind was so violent that, taking the travelers sidewise when they were crossing its direction, it heeled the sledge over and pushed the horse aside. Petrukha drove his good mare in front, at an easy trot, giving her an occasional lively shout of encouragement. Mukhortui pressed after her.

After driving thus for about ten minutes, Petrukha turned around and called out something. But neither Vasili Andreyitch nor Nikita could hear for the wind, but they guessed that they had reached the turning. In fact, Petrukha had turned to the right; the wind which had been at their side again blew in their faces, and to the right, through the snow, loomed something black. It was the bush beside the turning.

"Well, good-by to you!"

"Thanks, Petrukha!"

"The storm-clouds veil the sky with darkness!" shouted Petrukha, and disappeared.

"Quite a poet," said Vasili Andreyitch, and shook the reins.

"Yes, a fine young man, a genuine muzhik," said Nikita.

They drove on.

Nikita, protecting his head by crouching it down between his shoulders, so that his short beard covered up his throat, sat silent, trying not to lose the warmth which the tea had given him. Before him, he saw the straight lines of the shafts, which to his eyes looked like the ruts of the road; he saw the shifting quarters of the horse, with the knotted tail blown off in one direction by the wind; beyond, he saw the high duga-bow between the shafts, and the horse's rocking head and neck, with the floating mane. From time to time he noticed the stakes, and knew that, thus far, they had kept to the road, and he need not concern himself.

Vasili Andreyitch drove on, trusting to the horse to keep to the road. But Mukhortui, although he had rested a little in the village, went unwillingly, and seemed to shirk from the road, so that Vasili Andreyitch had to press him at times.

"Here is a stake on the right, here's another, and there's a third," reckoned Vasili Andreyitch, "and here, in front, is the forest," he thought, examining a dark patch ahead. But that which he took for a forest was only a bush. They passed the bush, drove about fifty yards farther, and there was neither the fourth stake nor the forest.

"We must reach the forest soon," thought Vasili Andreyitch; and buoyed up by the vodka and the tea, he shook the reins. The good, obedient animal responded, and now at an amble, now at an easy trot, made in the direction he was sent, although he knew it was not the way in which he should have been going. Ten minutes went by, still no forest.

"I'm afraid we are astray again!" said Vasili Andreyitch, pulling up.

Nikita silently got out from the sledge, and holding with his hand the flaps of his khalat, which now pressed against him and then flew from him as he stood and turned in the wind, began to tread the snow; first he went to one side, then to the other. Three times he went out of sight altogether. At last he returned, and took the reins from Vasili Andreyitch's hands.

"We must go to the right," he said sternly and peremptorily; and he turned the horse.

"Well, if it must be to the right, let us go to the right," said Vasili Andreyitch, passing over the reins and thrusting his frozen hands into his sleeves.

Nikita did not answer.

"Now then, old fellow, stir yourself," he called to the horse; but Mukhortui, in spite of the shake of the reins, went on only slowly. In places the snow was knee-deep, and the sledge jerked at every movement of the horse.

Nikita took the whip, which hung in front of the sledge, and struck once. The good creature, unused to the knout, sprang forward at a trot, but soon fell again to a slow amble, and then began to walk. Thus they went for five minutes. All was so dark, and so blurred with snow from above and below, that sometimes they could not make out the duga-bow. At times it seemed as if the sledge was standing, and the ground running back. Suddenly the horse stopped short, evidently perceiving something a little distance in front of him. Nikita once more lightly jumped out, throwing down the reins, and went in front to find out what was the matter. But hardly had he taken a pace clear ahead, when his feet slipped, and he went rolling down some steep place.

"Tpru, tpru, tpru!" he said to himself, falling and trying to stop his fall. There was nothing to seize hold of, and he brought up only when his feet plunged into a deep bed of snow which lay in the ravine.

The fringe of drifted snow which hung on the edge of the ravine, disturbed by Nikita's fall, showered down on him, and got into his neck.

"What a way of doing!" cried Nikita, reproachfully addressing the snow and the ravine, as he cleared out his coat-collar.

"Mikit, ha, Mikit," shouted Vasili Andreyitch, from above.

But Nikita did not answer.

He was too much occupied in shaking away the snow,

then in looking for the whip, which he lost in rolling down the bank. Having found the whip, he started to climb up the bank where he had rolled down, but it was a perfect impossibility; he slipped back every time; so that he was compelled to go along the foot of the bank to find a way up. About ten yards from the place where he fell, he managed to struggle up again on all fours, and then he turned back along the bank toward the place where the horse should have been. He could not see horse or sledge; but by going with the wind, he heard Vasili Andreyitch's voice and Mukhortui's whinny calling him, before he saw them.

"I 'm coming; I 'm coming. What are you cackling for!" he said.

Only when he had approached quite near the sledge could he make out the horse and Vasili Andreyitch, who stood close by, and looked gigantic.

"Where the devil have you been hiding? We've got to drive back. We must get back to Grishkino anyway," the master began to rebuke him angrily.

"I should be glad to get there, Vasili Andreyitch, but how are we to do it? Here is a ravine where if we once get in, we shall never come out. I pitched in there in such a way that I could hardly get out."

"Well, assuredly we can't stay here; somewhere we must go," said Vasili Andreyitch.

Nikita made no answer. He sat down on the sledge with his back to the wind, took off his boots and emptied them of snow; then, with a little straw which he took from the sledge, he stopped from the inside a gap in the left boot.

Vasili Andreyitch was silent, as if leaving everything to Nikita alone. Having got his boots on, Nikita drew his feet into the sledge, put on his mittens again, took the reins, and turned the horse along the ravine. But they had not driven a hundred paces when the horse stopped again. Another ravine confronted him.

Nikita got out again and began to explore the snow. He was gone a long while. At last he reappeared on the side opposite to that on which he started.

"Andreyitch, are you alive?" he called.

"Here!" shouted Vasili Andreyitch. "What is the matter?"

"I can't make anything out, it is too dark; except some ravines. We must drive to windward again."

They set off once more; Nikita explored again, stumbling through the snow. Again he sat down, again he crept forward, and at last, out of breath, he stopped beside the sledge.

"How now?" asked Vasili Andreyitch.

"Well, I'm quite tired out. And the horse is done up."

"What are we to do?"

"Wait a minute."

Nikita moved off again, and soon returned.

"Follow me," he said, going in front of the horse.

Vasili Andreyitch no longer gave orders, but implicitly did what Nikita told him.

"Here, this way!" shouted Nikita, stepping quickly to the right. Seizing Mukhortui by the bridle, he turned him toward a snowdrift.

At first the horse resisted; then dashed forward, hoping to leap the drift, but failed, and sank in snow up to the hams.

"Get out!" called Nikita to Vasili Andreyitch, who still sat in the sledge; and taking hold of one shaft, he tried to push the sledge after the horse.

"It's a pretty hard job, brother," he said to Mukhortui, "but it can't be helped. Na! na! Stir yourself! Just a little!" he called out.

The horse leaped forward, once, twice, but failed to clear himself, and sat back again as if thinking out something.

"Well, friend, this is no good," urged Nikita to Mukhortui. "Now, once more!"

Nikita pulled on the shaft again; Vasili Andreyitch did the same on the opposite side. The horse lifted his head, and made a sudden dash.

"Nu! na! You won't sink; don't be afraid," shouted Nikita.

One plunge, a second, a third, and at last the horse was out from the snowdrift, and stood still, breathing heavily and shaking himself clear. Nikita wanted to lead him on farther, but Vasili Andreyitch, in his two shubas, had so lost his breath that he could walk no more, and dropped into the sledge.

"Let me get my breath a little," he said, unbinding the handkerchief with which, at the village, he had tied the collar of his coat.

"We are all right here; you might as well lie down," said Nikita. "I'll lead him along;" and with Vasili Andreyitch in the sledge, he led the horse by the head about ten paces farther, then up a slight rise, and stopped.

The place where Nikita drew up was not in a hollow, where the snow, swept from the drifts and piled up, might perfectly shelter them; but nevertheless it was partly protected from the wind by the edge of the ravine.

There were moments when the wind seemed to become quieter; but these intervals did not last long, and after them the storm, as if to make up for such a rest, rushed on with tenfold vigor, and tore and whirled the more angrily.

Such a gust of wind swept past as Vasili Andreyitch, with recovered breath, got out of the sledge, and went up to Nikita to talk over the situation. They both instinctively bowed themselves, and waited until the stress should be over. Mukhortui laid back his ears and shook his head. When the blast had abated a little, Nikita took off his mittens, stuck them in his girdle, and having breathed a little on his hands, began to undo the strap from the duga-bow.

"Why are you doing that?" asked Vasili Andreyitch.

"I'm taking out the horse. What else can we do? I'm done up," said Nikita, as if apologizing.

"But could n't we drive somewhere?"

"No, we could not. We should only do harm to the horse. The poor beast is worn out," said Nikita, pointing to the creature, who stood there, with heavily heaving sides, submissively waiting for whatever should come. "We must put up for the night here," he repeated, as if

they were at their inn. He began to undo the collar straps.

The hames fell apart.

"But we shall be frozen, shan't we?" queried Vasili Andreyitch.

"Well, if we are, we cannot help it," said Nikita.

## CHAPTER VI

In his two shubas, Vasili Andreyitch was quite warm; especially after his exertion in the snowdrift. But a cold shiver ran down his back when he learned that they really had to spend the night where they were. To calm himself, he sat down in the sledge, and got out his cigarettes and matches.

Meanwhile Nikita went on taking out the horse. He undid the belly-band, took away the reins and collar-strap, and laid the duga-bow aside from the shafts; continuing to encourage the horse by speaking to him.

"Now, come out, come out," he said, leading him clear of the shafts. "We must tie you here. I'll put a bit of straw for you, and take off your bridle," he went on, doing as he said. "After a bite, you'll feel ever so much better."

But Mukhortui was not calmed by Nikita's words; uneasily, he shifted his feet, pressed against the sledge, turned his back to the wind, and rubbed his head on Nikita's sleeve.

As if not wholly to reject the treat of straw which Nikita put under his nose, Mukhortui just once seized a wisp out of the sledge, but quickly deciding that there was more important business than to eat straw, he threw it down again, and the wind instantly tore it away and hid it in the snow.

"Now we must make a signal," said Nikita, turning the front of the sledge against the wind; and having tied the shafts together with a strap, he set them on end in front of the sledge. "If the snow covers us, the good folk will see the shafts, and dig us out," said Ni-



kita, slapping his mittens together and pulling them on. "That's what old hands advise."

Vasili Andreyitch had meanwhile opened his shuba, and making a shelter with its folds, he rubbed match after match on the steel box. But his hands trembled, and the kindled matches were blown out by the wind, one after another, some when just struck, others when he thrust them to the cigarette. At last one match burned fully, and lighted up for a moment the fur of his shuba, his hand with the gold ring on the bent forefinger, and the snow-sprinkled straw which stuck out from under the sacking. The cigarette lighted. Twice he eagerly whiffed the smoke, swallowed it, blew it through his mustaches, and would have gone on, but the wind tore away the burning tobacco and sent it whirling after the straw. Even these few whiffs of tobacco-smoke cheered up Vasili Andreyitch.

"Well, we will stop here," he said authoritatively.

"Wait a minute, and I'll make a flag," he said, picking up the handkerchief which he had taken from round his collar and put down in the sledge. Drawing off his gloves, and reaching up, he tied the handkerchief tightly to the strap that held the shafts together.

The handkerchief at once began to beat about wildly; now clinging round a shaft, now streaming out, and crackling like a whip.

"That's a clever piece of work," said Vasili Andreyitch, pleased with what he had done, and getting into the sledge. "We should be warmer together, but there's not room for two," he said.

"I can find a place," said Nikita, "but the horse must be covered; he's sweating, the good fellow. Excuse me," he added, going to the sledge, and drawing the sacking from under Vasili Andreyitch. This he folded, and after taking off the saddle and breeching, covered Mukhortui with it.

"Anyway, it will be a bit warmer, silly," he said, putting the saddle and heavy breeching over the sacking.

"You won't need the cloth, will you? and give me a

little straw," said Nikita, coming back to the sledge after he had finished his work.

Taking these from beneath Vasili Andreyitch, Nikita went behind the sledge, dug there a hole in the snow, stuffed in the straw, and pulling down his hat, wrapping his kaftan well around him, and covering himself with the coarse matting, sat down on the straw, leaning against the bark back of the sledge, which kept off the wind and snow.

Vasili Andreyitch shook his head disapprovingly at what Nikita was doing, as he usually found fault with the peasants' ignorance and stupidity; and he began to make his own arrangements for the night.

He smoothed the remaining straw and heaped it thicker under his side; then he thrust his hands into his sleeves, and settled his head in the corner of the sledge sheltered from the wind in front.

He did not feel sleepy. He lay and thought; thought about one thing only, which was the aim, reason, pleasure, and pride of his life:—about how much money he had made, and might make, and how much other men whom he knew had made and possessed, and the means whereby they gained it and were gaining it; and how he, in like manner, might gain a good deal more. The purchase of the Goryatchkin forest was for him an affair of the utmost importance. He counted on making from this transaction as much as ten thousand! And he began mentally to estimate the value of the forest, which he had inspected in the autumn so carefully as to count all the trees on two desyatins.

"The oak will make sledge-runners. The small stuff will take care of itself. And there'll be thirty cords of wood to the acre,"<sup>1</sup> said he to himself. "At the very worst there'll be a little less than eighty rubles an acre. There are one hundred and fifty acres."

He reckoned it up mentally and saw that it amounted to about twelve thousand rubles; but without his abacus he could not calculate it exactly.

<sup>1</sup> He says, "Thirty sazhen to the desyatin." A cubic sazhen is equivalent to 268 cords; a desyatin is 2.7 acres. In his prospective purchase there are fifty-six desyatins.

"But for all that, I won't pay ten thousand; say eight thousand; besides, one must allow for the bare spaces. I'll oil the surveyor, — a hundred rubles will do it, — a hundred and fifty, if necessary; he'll deduct about thirteen acres out of the forest. He is sure to sell for eight; three thousand down. Never fear; he will weaken at that," he thought, pressing his forearm on the pocket-book beneath.

"And how we lost our way after we left the turning, God only knows! The forest and the woodman's hut should be near by. I should like to hear the dogs, but they never bark when they're wanted, the cursed brutes."

He opened his collar a little from his ear and tried to listen; all he could hear was the same whistle of the wind, the flapping and cracking of the handkerchief on the shafts, and the pelting of the falling snow on the bark matting of the sledge.

He covered himself again.

"If one had only known this beforehand, we had better have stayed where we were. But no matter, we shall get there to-morrow. It is only a day lost. In this weather, the others won't get there either."

Then he remembered that on the twenty-first he had to receive the price for some gelded rams, from the butcher.

"I wanted to be there myself, for if he does n't find me, my wife won't know how to receive the money. She's very inexperienced, she does n't know about the right way of doing things," he continued to reflect, remembering how she had failed in her behavior towards a commissary of police,<sup>1</sup> who had come to pay them a visit the day before, at the feast. "Just a woman, of course. What has she ever seen anywhere? In my father's time, what a house we had! Nothing out of the way, a well-to-do countryman's: a barn and an inn, and that was the whole property. And now in these fifteen years what have I done? A general store, two taverns, a flour-mill, a granary, two farms rented, a

<sup>1</sup> *Stanovož*.

house and warehouse all iron-roofed," he remembered proudly. "Not as it was in father's time! Who is known over the whole place?"<sup>1</sup> Brekhunof.

"And why is this? Because I know my business, I look after things; not like others, who idle or waste their time in foolishness. I don't sleep at night. Storm or no storm, I start out. And of course, the thing is done. People think it's fun making money. Not at all; you work and rack your brains. You spend your night this way outdoors, and go without sleep! The thoughts whirling in your head are as good as a cushion!" he exclaimed with pride. "They think men get on through luck. Look at the Mironofs, who have their millions, now. Why? They worked. Then God gives. If God only grants me health!"

And the idea that he, also, might become a millionaire like Mironof, who began with nothing, so excited Vasili Andréyitch that he suddenly felt a need to talk to some one. But there was no one. .... If he could only have reached Goryatchkino, he might have talked with the landowner, and "put spectacles on him."

"Whew! how it blows! It will snow us up so that we can't get out in the morning," he thought, as he listened to the rush of the wind, which blew against the front of the sledge, bending it back, and lashed the snow against the bark matting. He lifted himself and looked out: in the white whirling darkness all he could see was Mukhortui's black head, and his back covered with the fluttering matting, and his thick twisted tail; all around, on every side, in front and behind, was the same monotonous white waving mist, occasionally appearing to grow a little lighter, then again growing thicker and denser.<sup>2</sup>

"I was foolish enough yielding to Nikita," he thought. "We ought to have driven on, we should have come out somewhere. We might have gone back to Grishkino, and stayed at Taras's. Now we must sit here all night. Well, what was I thinking about? Yes, that God gives

<sup>1</sup> *Kto gremit*, who thunders.

<sup>2</sup> *Sgushchayushchayasa*: literally, "condensing itself."

to the industrious, and not to the lazy, not to loafers and fools. It's time for a smoke, too."

He sat up, got his cigarette-case, and stretched himself flat on his stomach, to protect the light from the wind with the flaps of his coat; but the wind got in and put out one match after another. At last he managed to get a cigarette lit, and he began to smoke. The fact that he succeeded greatly delighted him. Though the wind smoked more of his cigarette than he did, nevertheless he got about three puffs, and felt better.

He again threw himself back in the sledge, wrapped himself up, and returned to his recollections and dreams; very unexpectedly he lost himself and fell asleep.

But suddenly something touched him and woke him up. Whether it was Mukhortui pulling the straw from under him, or something within him that startled him, at all events he awoke, and his heart began to beat so quickly and violently that the sledge seemed to be shaking under him.

He opened his eyes. Everything around was the same as before; only it seemed a little lighter.

"The dawn," he said to himself; "it must be nearly morning."

But he instantly remembered that the light was only due to the rising of the moon.

He lifted himself, and looked first at the horse. Mukhortui was standing with his back to the wind, and shivering all over. The snow-covered sacking had fallen off on one side; the breeching had slipped down; the snowy head and the fluttering crest and mane, all were now clearly visible.

Vasili Andreyitch bent over the back of the sledge and looked behind. Nikita was still sitting in the old position which he had first taken. The sacking with which he had protected himself and his feet were covered with snow.

"I'm afraid the muzhik will be frozen; his clothes are so wretched. I might be held responsible. I declare they're such senseless people! They truly have n't the slightest forethought!" reflected Vasili Andreyitch;

and he was tempted to take the sacking from the horse, to put over Nikita ; but it was cold to get out and stir around, and besides, the horse might freeze to death.

"What made me bring him ? It is all her stupidity ! " thought Vasili Andreyitch, remembering his unattractive wife ; and he turned again to his former place in the front of the sledge.

"My uncle once sat in snow all night, like this," he reflected, "and no harm came of it. And Sevastian also was dug out," he went on, remembering another case, "but he was dead, stiff like a frozen carcass. If we had only stopped at Grishkino, nothing would have happened."

Carefully covering himself, so that the warmth of the fur might not be wasted, but might protect his neck, knees, and the soles of his feet, he shut his eyes, trying to sleep again. But however much he tried, this time he could not lose himself ; on the contrary, he felt alert and excited. Again he began to count his gains and the debts due to him ; again he began to boast of his success, and to feel proud of himself and his position ; but he was all the while disturbed by a lurking fear, and by the unpleasant regret that he had not stopped for the night at Grishkino.

"It would have been good to lie on the bench in a warm room !" He turned from side to side several times ; he curled himself up trying to find a better position, more sheltered from the wind and snow, but all the time he felt uncomfortable ; he rose again and changed his position, crossed his feet, shut his eyes, and lay silent ; but either his crossed feet, in their high felt boots, began to ache, or the wind blew in somewhere ; and thus lying for a short time, he again began the disagreeable reflection, how comfortably he would have rested in the warm house at Grishkino. Again he rose, changed his position, wrapped himself up, and again tucked himself in.

Once Vasili Andreyitch fancied he heard a distant cock-crow. He felt glad, and threw back his shuba, and strained his ear to listen ; but in spite of all his efforts he could hear nothing but the sound of the wind

whistling against the shafts, and flapping the handkerchief, and the snow lashing the bark matting of the sledge.

Nikita had been motionless all the time, just as he had sat from the first, not stirring or even answering Vasili Andreyitch, though he spoke to him twice.

"He doesn't care in the least; he must be asleep," Vasili Andreyitch thought angrily, looking behind the sledge at Nikita, deeply covered with snow.

Twenty times Vasili Andreyitch thus rose and lay down. It seemed to him this night would never end.

"It must be near morning now," he thought once as he rose and glanced round him. "Let me look at my watch. I shall freeze if I unbutton my coat; but if I only know it is near morning, I shall feel better. We could begin to harness the horse."

At the bottom of his mind, Vasili Andreyitch knew that it could not be anywhere near morning; but he began to feel more and more afraid, and he chose both to assure himself and to deceive himself. He cautiously undid the hooks of his short shuba, then putting his hand in at the bosom, he felt about until he got at the waistcoat. With great trouble, he drew out his silver watch enameled with flowers, and tried to examine it. Without a light, he could make out nothing.

Again he lay down flat on his elbows and his knees, as when he lighted the cigarette; got the matches, and proceeded to strike. This time he was more careful, and feeling for a match with the largest head, ignited it at the first stroke. When he brought the face of the watch into the light he could not believe his eyes.... It was not later than ten minutes past twelve. The whole night was still before him.

"Oh, what a long night!" thought Vasili Andreyitch, feeling the cold run down his back; and buttoning up again and wrapping his shuba round him, he snuggled into the corner of the sledge with the intention of waiting patiently.

Suddenly, above the monotonous roar of the wind, he distinctly heard a new and a living sound. It grew gradually louder, and became quite clear; then began to die

away with equal regularity. There could be no doubt it was a wolf. And this wolf was so near, that down the wind one could hear how he changed his cry by the movement of his jaws. Vasili Andreyitch turned back his collar and listened attentively. Mukhortui listened likewise, pricking up his ears, and when the wolf had ceased his chant he shifted his feet, and neighed warningly.

After this Vasili Andreyitch not only was unable to sleep, but even to keep calm. The more he tried to think of his accounts, of his business, reputation, importance, and property, more and more fear grew upon him; and above all his thoughts, one thought stood out predominantly and penetratingly:—the thought of his rashness in not stopping at Grishkino.

"The forest,—what do I care about the forest?<sup>1</sup> There is plenty of business without that, thank God! Ah, if we had only stayed for the night!" said he to himself. "They say drunken men soon freeze to death," he thought, "and I have had some drink."

Then testing his own sensations, he felt that he began to shiver, either from cold or fear. He tried to wrap himself up and to lie down, as before; but he could not any longer do that. He could not stay in one position, wanted to rise, to do something so as to suppress his gathering fears, against which he felt helpless. Again he got his cigarettes and matches; but only three of the latter remained, and these were bad ones. All three rubbed away without lighting.

"The devil take you, curse you!" he objurgated, himself not knowing whom or what, and he threw away the cigarette. He was about to throw away the match-box also, but stayed his hand, and thrust it into his pocket instead. He was so agitated that he could no longer remain in his place. He got out of the sledge, and, standing with his back to the wind, set his girdle again, tightly, and low down.

"What is the use of lying down? It is only waiting for death; much better mount the horse and get away!"

<sup>1</sup> *Bog s nim, s lyesom*: literally, "God with it, with the forest."



the thought suddenly flashed into his mind. "The horse will not stand still with some one on his back. It's all the same to *him*, — thinking of Nikita, — if he does die. What sort of a life has he? He does not care much even about his life, but as for me, — thank God, I have something to live for!" ....

Untying the horse from the sledge, he threw the reins over his neck, and tried to mount, but his shubas and his boots were so heavy that he failed. Then he clambered on the sledge, and tried to mount from that; but the sledge tilted under his weight, and he failed again. At last, on a third attempt, he backed the horse to the sledge, and, cautiously balancing on the edge, got his body across the horse's back. Lying thus for a moment, he pushed himself once, twice, and finally threw one leg over and seated himself, supporting his feet on the loose breeching straps in place of stirrups. The shaking of the sledge roused Nikita, and he got up; Vasili Andreyitch thought he was speaking.

"Listen to you, fool? What, must I die in this way, for nothing?" exclaimed Vasili Andreyitch. Tucking under his knees the loose skirts of his shuba, he turned the horse round, and rode away from the sledge in the direction where he expected to find the forest and the keeper's hut.

## CHAPTER VII

NIKITA had not stirred since he had covered himself with the matting and taken his seat behind the sledge. Like all men who live with nature, and are acquainted with poverty, he was patient, and could wait for hours, even days, without growing restless or irritated. When his master called him, he heard, but made no answer, because he did not want to stir. Although he still felt the warmth from the tea he had taken, and from the exercisc of struggling through the snowdrifts, he knew the warmth would not last long, and that he could not warm himself again by moving about, for he was ex-

hausted, and felt as a horse does when, in spite of the whip, it stops, and its master perceives that it must have food before it can work again. His foot, the one in the torn boot, was numb, and he could no longer feel his great toe. And, moreover, his whole body kept growing colder and colder.

The thought that he might and in all probability would die that night came upon him, but this thought did not seem especially unpleasant or especially awful. It did not seem to him especially unpleasant, because his life had not been a perpetual festival, but rather an incessant round of toil of which he was beginning to weary. And this thought did not seem to him especially awful, because, beyond the masters whom he served here, like Vasili Andreyitch, he felt himself dependent upon the Great Master<sup>1</sup>; upon Him who had sent him into this life, and he knew that even after death he must remain in the power of that Master, and that that Master would not treat him badly.

"Is it a pity to leave what you are practised in, and used to? Well, what's to be done about it? You must get used to new things as well."

"Sins?" he thought, and recollected his drunkenness, the money wasted in drink, his ill-treatment of his wife, his profanity, neglect of church and of the fasts, and all things for which the priest reprimanded him at the confessional. "Of course, these are sins. But then, did I bring them on myself? Whatever I am, I suppose God made me so. Well, and about these sins? How can one help it?"

Thus ran his reflections, and after he had considered what might happen to him that night, he let it have the go-by, and gave himself up to whatever notions and memories came of their own accord into his mind. He remembered Marfa's visit, and the drunkenness among the peasants, and his own abstinence from drink; then he recalled how they had started on their present journey; Taras's izba, and the talk about the break-up of the family; that reminded him of his own lad; then he

<sup>1</sup> *Glavnyi Khozyaïn*, "Master-in-chief."

thought of Mukhortui, with the sacking over him for warmth; and his master, rolling round in the sledge, and making it creak.

"I suppose he is vexed and angry because he started out," said Nikita to himself. "A man who lives such a life as his does not want to die; not like people of my kind."

And all these recollections and thoughts interwove and jumbled themselves in his brain, until he fell asleep.

When Vasili Andreyitch mounted the horse, he twisted aside the sledge, and the back of it, against which Nikita was leaning, slid away, and one of the runner-ends struck him in the side. Nikita awoke, and was compelled to change his position. Straightening his legs with difficulty, and throwing off the snow which covered them, he got up. Instantly an agonizing cold penetrated his whole frame. On making out what was happening, he wanted Vasili Andreyitch to leave him the sacking, which was no longer needed for the horse, so that he might put it round himself.

But Vasili Andreyitch did not wait, and disappeared in the mist of snow.

Thus left alone, Nikita considered what he should do. He felt that he had not strength enough to start off in search of some house; and it was no longer possible for him to sit down in his former place, for it was already covered with snow; and he knew he could not get warm in the sledge, having nothing to cover him. There seemed no warmth at all from his kaftan and shuba. It was a bitter moment. He felt as cold as if he had only his shirt on. "Our Father, who art in Heaven," he repeated; and the consciousness that he was not alone but that Some One heard him and would not desert him comforted him. He drew a deep sigh, and keeping the matting over his head, he crept into the sledge and lay down in the place where his master had lain.

But he could not possibly keep warm in the sledge. At first he shivered all over, then the shivering ceased, and, little by little, he began to lose consciousness. Whether he was dying, or falling asleep, he knew not; but he was as ready for the one as for the other.

## CHAPTER VIII

MEANWHILE Vasili Andreyitch, using his feet and the straps of the harness, urged the horse in the direction where he, for some cause, expected to find the forest and the forester's hut. The snow blinded his eyes, and the wind, it seemed, was bent on staying him; but with head bent forward, and all the time pulling up his shuba between him and the cold pad, on which he could not settle himself, he kept urging on the horse. The dark bay, though with difficulty, obediently ambled on in the direction to which he was turned.

For five minutes he rode on; as it seemed to him, in a straight line; seeing nothing but the horse's head and the white waste, and hearing only the whistling of the wind about the horse's ears and collar of his own shuba.

Suddenly a dark patch showed in front of him. His heart began to beat with joy, and he rode on toward the object, already seeing in it the walls of village houses. But the dark patch was not stationary, it kept moving, and it was not a village but a patch of tall mugwort, growing on a strip of land and protruding through the snow, and shaking desperately under the blast of the wind which bent their heads all in one direction and whistled through them.

The sight of this mugwort tormented by the pitiless wind somehow made Vasili Andreyitch tremble, and he started to ride away hastily; not perceiving that in approaching the patch of mugwort, he had quite turned out of his first direction, and that now he was heading the opposite way, though he still supposed that he was riding toward where the forester's hut should be. But the horse seemed always to make toward the right, and so Vasili Andreyitch had to guide it toward the left.

Again a dark patch appeared before him; again he rejoiced, believing that now surely this was a village. But once more it was a patch of tall mugwort, once more the dry grass was shaking desperately, and, as

before, frightening Vasili Andreyitch. But it could not be the same patch of grass, for near it was a horse-track, now disappearing in the snow. Vasili Andreyitch stopped, bent down, and looked carefully; a horse-track, not yet snow-covered; it could only be the hoof-prints of his own horse. He had evidently gone round in a small circle.

"And I shall perish in this way," he thought.

To overcome his terror, he urged on the horse with still greater energy, peering into the white mist of snow, wherein he saw nothing but flitting and fitful points of light which vanished the instant he looked at them. Once he thought he heard either the barking of dogs or the howling of wolves, but the sounds were so faint and indistinct, that he could not be sure whether he had heard them or imagined them; and he stopped and began to strain his ears and listen.

Suddenly a terrible, deafening cry beat upon his ears, and everything began to tremble and quake about him. Vasili Andreyitch seized the horse's neck, but that also shook, and the terrible cry grew still more frightful. For some seconds, Vasili Andreyitch could not collect himself, or understand what had happened. It was only this: Mukhortui, whether to encourage himself or to call for help, had neighed, loudly and resonantly.

"Tfu! Plague take you! You cursed brute, how you frightened me!" said Vasili Andreyitch to himself. But even when he understood the cause of his terror, he could not shake it off.

"I must consider and steady my nerves," he said to himself again, and saw at the same time he could not regain his self-control, but kept urging forward the horse without noting that he was now going with the wind, instead of against it. Especially when the horse walked slowly, his body, where it was exposed and where it touched the pad, was freezing and ached. His hands and legs shook and he was short of breath. He could see that he was likely to perish in the midst of this horrible snowy waste, and he could see no way of rescue. He forgot all about the forester's hut, and desired one thing

only,—to get back to the sledge, that he might not perish alone, like that mugwort in the midst of the terrible waste of snow.

Suddenly the horse stumbled under him, caught in a snowdrift, and began to plunge, and fell on his side. Vasili Andreyitch jumped off as he did so, dragging with him the breeching on which his foot was supported, and turned the pad round by holding to it as he jumped.

As soon as Vasili Andreyitch was off his back, the horse struggled to his feet, plunged forward one leap and then another, and neighing again, with the sacking and breeching trailing after him, disappeared, leaving Vasili Andreyitch alone in the snowdrift.

He pressed on in pursuit of the horse, but the snow was so deep, and his shubas were so heavy, that after he had gone not more than twenty paces, sinking over the knee at each step, he was out of breath, and stopped.

"The forest, the sheep, the farms, the shop, the taverns, the iron-roofed house and granary, my son!" thought he, "how can I leave them all? What does this really mean! It cannot be!"

These words flashed through his mind. Then somehow or other he recalled the wind-shaken mugwort which he had ridden past twice, and such a panic seized him that he lost all sense of the reality of what was happening. He asked himself, "Is not this all a dream?"—and tried to wake up. But there was nothing to wake up from! It was actual snow lashing his face and covering him and benumbing his right hand, from which he had dropped the glove; and it was a real desert in which he was now alone, like that mugwort, waiting for inevitable, speedy, and incomprehensible death.

"Queen in heaven, St. Nicholas,<sup>1</sup> teacher of temperance!"

He recalled the Te Deums of the day; the shrine with the black image in a golden chasuble; the tapers

<sup>1</sup> *Svyatitelyu otche Mikolaye*. A semi-Slavonic form; literally, "Bishop Father Nikolai."

which he sold for the shrine, and which, when they were at once returned to him hardly touched by the flame, he used to put back into the store-chest.<sup>1</sup> And he began to implore that same Nicholas—the miracle-worker—to save him, vowing to the saint a *Te Deum* and tapers.

But in some way, here, he clearly and without a doubt realized that the image, chasuble, tapers, priests, masses, though they were all very important and necessary in their place, in the church, were of no service to him now; and that between those tapers and *Te Deums*, and his present disastrous plight, there could be no possible connection.

"I must not give up," he said to himself, "I must follow the horse's tracks, or they, too, will be snowed over." This idea struck him, and he made on. "He'll get away if I don't overtake him. But I must n't hurry or else I shall be worse off and perish still more miserably."

But notwithstanding his resolution to walk quietly, he kept hurrying on, running, falling down every minute, rising and falling again. The hoof-prints were already almost indistinguishable where the snow was not deep. "I am lost!" thought Vasili Andreyitch, "if I lose this track and don't overtake the horse."

But at that instant, casting a glance in front, he saw something dark. It was Mukhortui, and not merely Mukhortui, but the sledge, and the shafts with the handkerchief.

Mukhortui, with the pad twisted round to one side, and the trailed breeching and sacking, was standing, not in his former place, but nearer to the shafts; and was shaking his head, which was drawn down by the bridle beneath his feet.

It turned out that Vasili Andreyitch had stuck in the same ravine into which he and Nikita had previously

<sup>1</sup> It was a part of Vasili Andreyitch's duties as *Iserkovnui starosta* to sell the candles which are abundantly used in the Russian service and which, after the mass, are returned and often resold, thus providing no small revenue. — ED.

plunged, that the horse had led him back to the sledge, and that he had dismounted at not more than fifty paces from the place where the sledge lay.

## CHAPTER IX

VASILY ANDREYITCH struggled back to the sledge, and clutched hold of it, and stood so, motionless for a long time, trying to calm himself and to get back his breath. There was no sign of Nikita in his former place, but something covered with snow was lying in the sledge, and Vasili Andreyitch conjectured that it was Nikita. Vasili Andreyitch's terror had now altogether disappeared; if he felt any fear, it was of that state of terror which he had experienced when on the horse, and especially when he was alone in the snowdrift. By any and every means, he must keep away that terror; and in order to keep it away it was necessary for him to do something, to occupy himself with something.

Accordingly, the first thing he did was to turn his back to the wind and throw open his shuba. As soon as he felt a little rested, he shook out the snow from his boots and from his left-hand glove, — the right-hand glove was lost beyond recovery and was undoubtedly already buried somewhere deep in the snow, — then he bound up his girdle again, tight and low-down, as he always did when he was going out of his shop to buy grain from the peasants' carts. He tightened his belt and prepared for action. The first thing which appeared to him necessary to do was to free the horse's leg. So Vasili Andreyitch did this; then, clearing the bridle, he tied Mukhortui to the iron cramp in front of the sledge, as before, and walking round the horse's quarters, he adjusted the pad, the breeching, and the sacking.

But as he did this, he perceived a movement in the sledge, and Nikita's head rose out of the snow that covered it. Obviously with great difficulty, the half-frozen peasant rose and sat up; and in a strange fashion, as



if he were driving away flies, waved his hand before his face. He waved his hand and said something which Vasili Andreyitch interpreted as a call to himself.

Vasili Andreyitch left the sack unadjusted, and went to the sledge.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked. "What are you saying?"

"I am dy-y-ing, that's what's the matter," said Nikita, brokenly, struggling for speech. "Give what I have earned to the lad. Or to the wife; it's all the same."

"What, are you really frozen?" asked Vasili Andreyitch.

"I can feel I've got my death. Forgive .... for Christ's sake ...." said Nikita, in a sobbing voice, continuing to wave his hand before his face, as if driving away flies.

Vasili Andreyitch stood for half a minute silent and motionless; then suddenly, with the same resolution with which he used to strike hands over a good bargain, he took a step back, turned up the sleeves of his shuba, and using both hands, began to rake the snow from off Nikita and the sledge. When he had brushed out, Vasili Andreyitch quickly took off his girdle, opened out his shuba, and moving Nikita with a push, he lay down on him, covering him not only with the fur coat, but with the full length of his own body, which glowed with warmth.

Adjusting with his hands the skirts of his coat, so as to come between Nikita and the bark matting of the sledge, and tucking the tail of the coat between his knees, Vasili Andreyitch lay flat, with his head against the bark matting in the sledge-front; and now he no longer could hear either the stirring of the horse or the whistling of the wind; all he could hear was Nikita's breathing. At first, and for a long time, Nikita lay without a sign; then he gave a loud sigh, and moved.

"Ah, there you are! And yet you say 'die.' Lie still, get warm, and somehow we shall ...." began Vasili Andreyitch.

But, to his own surprise, he could not speak: because

his eyes were filled with tears, and his lower jaw began to quiver violently. He said no more — only gulped down something which rose in his throat.

"I was well scared, that is clear, and how weak I feel!" he thought of himself. But this weakness not only was not unpleasant to him, but rather gave him a peculiar and hitherto unknown delight.

"That's what we are!" he said to himself, experiencing a strange triumph and emotion. He lay quiet for some time, wiping his eyes with the fur of his shuba and tucking under his knees the right skirt, which the wind kept turning up.

He felt a passionate desire to let some one else know of his happy condition.

"Mikita!" he said.

"It's comfortable, it's warm," came an answer from below.

"So it is, friend! I was nearly lost. And you would have been frozen, and I should have...."

But here again his face began to quiver, and his eyes once more filled with tears, and he could say no more.

"Well, never mind," he thought, "I know well enough about myself, what I know."

And he kept quiet. Thus he lay for a long time.

Nikita warmed him from below, and the fur coat warmed him from above; but his hands, with which he held the coat-skirts down on both sides of Nikita, and his feet, from which the wind kept lifting the shuba, began to freeze. Especially cold was his right hand, unprotected by a glove. But he did not think either of his legs or of his hands. He thought only of how to warm the muzhik who lay beneath him.

Several times he looked at the horse, and saw that his back was uncovered, and the sacking and breeching were hanging down nearly to the snow. He ought to get up and cover the horse; but he could not bring himself to leave Nikita for even a moment, and so disturb that happy situation in which he felt himself; he now no longer had any sense of terror.

"Never fear, we shan't lose him this time," he said

to himself, about his way of warming Nikita, and with the same boastfulness as he used to speak of his buying and selling.

Thus Vasili Andreyitch continued lying an hour and then another and then a third, but he was unconscious of the passage of time.

At first his thoughts were filled with impressions of the snow-storm, the shafts of the sledge, the horse under the duga-bow, all in confusion before his eyes; he remembered Nikita, lying under him; then mingling with these recollections rose others, of the festival, his wife, the commissary of police, the taper-box; then again of Nikita, this time lying under the taper-box. Then came apparitions of peasants selling and buying, and white walls, the iron-roofed houses, with Nikita lying underneath; then all was confused, one thing blending with another; and, like the colors in the rainbow, uniting in one white light, all the different impressions fused into one nothing; and he fell asleep.

For a long time he slept dreamlessly; but before daybreak visions visited him again. It seemed to him that he was once more standing beside the taper-box, and Tikhon's wife was asking him for a five-kopek candle for the festival-day; he wanted to take the taper and give it to her, but he could not move his hands, which hung down, thrust tightly into his pockets. He wanted to walk round the box, but his feet would not move; his goloshes, new and shiny, had grown to the stone floor, and he could neither move them, nor take out his feet.

All at once the box ceased to be a taper-box, and turned into a bed; and Vasili Andreyitch sees himself lying, face downward, on the taper-box, and yet it is his own bed in his own house. And thus he lies and is unable to get up; and yet he must get up, because Ivan Matveyitch, the commissary of police, will soon come for him, and he must go with Ivan Matveyitch either to bargain for the forest, or to set the breeching right on Mukhortui.

He asks his wife:—

"Well, Mikolavna,<sup>1</sup> has he not come yet?"

"No," she says, "he has not."

He hears some one drive up to the front steps. It must be he. No, he has gone past.

"Mikolavna, Mikolavna! what, has he not come yet?"

"No."

And he lies on the bed and is still unable to rise, and is still waiting. And this waiting is painful, and yet pleasant.

All at once, his joy is fulfilled: the expected one has come; not Ivan Matveyitch, the stanovoï, but some one else, and yet the one for whom he has been waiting. He has come, and he calls to him; and he that called is he who had bidden him lie down on Nikita.

And Vasili Andreyitch is glad because that one has visited him.

"I am coming," he cries joyfully. And the cry awakens him!

He wakes; but wakes an entirely different person from what he had been when he fell asleep. He wants to rise, and cannot; to move his arm, and cannot, — his leg, and he cannot do that. He wants to turn his head, and cannot do even so much. He is surprised but not at all disturbed by this. He divines that this is death, and is not at all disturbed even by that. And he remembers that Nikita is lying under him, and that he has got warm, and is alive; and it seems to him that he is Nikita, and Nikita is he; that his life is not in himself, but in Nikita. He makes an effort to listen, and hears Nikita's breathing, even his slight snoring.

"Nikita is alive, and therefore I also am alive!" he says to himself, triumphantly.

He remembers his money, his shop, his house, his purchases and sales, the Mironofs' millions; and it is hard for him to understand why that man called Vasili Brekhunof had troubled himself with all those things with which he had troubled himself.

"Well, he did not know what it was all about," he

<sup>1</sup> Mikolavna, rustic form of Nikolayevna, "daughter of Nikolai"; the patronymic used familiarly without the given name.

thinks, concerning this Vasili Brekhunof. "I did not know; but now I do know. No mistake this time; *now I know.*"

And again he hears the summons of that one who had before called him.

"I am coming, I am coming," he says with his whole joy-thrilled being. And he feels himself free, with nothing to encumber him more.

And nothing more, in this world, was seen, or heard, or felt by Vasili Andreyitch.

Round about the storm still eddied. The same whirlwinds of snow covered the dead Vasili Andreyitch's shuba, and Mukhortui, all of a tremble, and the sledge, now hardly to be seen, with Nikita lying in the bottom of it, kept warm beneath his dead master.

## CHAPTER X

JUST before morning Nikita awoke. He was aroused by the cold again creeping along his back. He had dreamt that he was driving from the mill with a cart-load of his master's flour, and that in crossing the brook, as he went past the bridge, the cart got stuck. And he sees himself go beneath the cart, and lift it, straightening up his back. But, wonderful! — the cart does not stir, it sticks to his back, so that he can neither lift it nor get out from under it. It was crushing his loins. And how cold it was! He must get away somehow.

"There! Stop!" he cries to whoever it is that presses his back with the load. "Take the sacks out!"

But the cart still presses him, always colder and colder; and suddenly a peculiar knocking awakes him completely, and he remembers everything. The cold cart, — that was his dead and frozen master, lying upon him. The knocking was from Mukhortui, who had struck twice on the sledge with his hoofs.

"Andreyitch, eh, Andreyitch!" calls Nikita, softly, straightening his back, and already having a suspicion of the truth.

But Andreyitch does not answer, and his body and legs are hard, and cold, and heavy, like iron weights.

"He must be dead. May his be the Kingdom of Heaven!" thinks Nikita.

He turns his head, digs with his hand through the snow about him, and opens his eyes. It is daylight. The wind still whistles through the shafts, and the snow is still falling; but with a difference, not lashing upon the bark matting, as before, but silently covering the sledge and horse, ever deeper and deeper; and the horse's breathing and stirring are no more to be heard.

"He must be frozen, too," thinks Nikita.

And, in fact, those hoof-strokes on the sledge were the last struggles of Mukhortui, by that time quite benumbed, to keep on his legs.

"God, Father, it seems Thou callest me as well," says Nikita, to himself. "Let Thy holy will be done. But it is hard. .... Still you can't die twice, and you must die once. If it would only come quicker!" ....

And he draws in his arm again, shutting his eyes; and he loses consciousness, with the conviction that this time he is really going to die altogether.

At dinner-time on the next day, the peasants with their shovels dug out Vasili Andreyitch and Nikita, only seventy yards from the road, and half a verst from the village. The snow had hidden the sledge, but the shafts and the handkerchief were still visible. Mukhortui, up to his belly in snow, with the breeching and sacking trailing from his back, stood all whitened, his dead head pressed in on the apple of his throat; his nostrils were fringed with icicles, his eyes filled with frost and frozen round as with tears. In that one night he had become so thin, that he was nothing but skin and bones.

Vasili Andreyitch was stiffened like a frozen carcass, and he lay with his legs spread apart, just as he was when they rolled him off Nikita. His prominent hawk-eyes were frozen, and his open mouth under his clipped mustache was filled with snow.

But Nikita, though chilled through, was alive. When he was roused, he imagined he was already dead, and

that what they were doing with him was happening, not in this world, but in another. When he heard the shouts of the peasants who were digging him out and rolling the frozen Vasili Andreyitch from him he was surprised, at first, to think that in the other world, also, peasants should be shouting so, and that they had the same kind of a body. But when he understood that he was still here, in this world, he was rather sorry than glad; especially when he realized that the toes of both his feet were frozen.

Nikita lay in the hospital for two months. They cut off three toes from him, and the others recovered, so that he was able to work. For twenty years more he went on living, first as a farm-laborer, latterly as a watchman. He died at home, just as he wished, only this year, — laid under the holy images, with a lighted wax taper in his hands.

Before his death, he asked forgiveness from his old wife, and forgave her for the cooper; he took leave of his son and the grandchildren; and went away truly pleased that, in dying, he released his son and daughter-in-law from the added burden of his keep, and that he himself was, this time, really going out of a life grown wearisome to him, into that other one which with every passing year had grown clearer and more desirable to him.

Whether he is better off, or worse off, there, in the place where he awoke after that real death, whether he was disappointed or found things there just as he expected, is what we shall all of us soon learn.

# THE KREUTZER SONATA

## CHAPTER I

*"But I say unto you that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after, her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."* — MATT. v. 28.

*"The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, but they to whom it is given."* — MATT. xix. 10, 11.

IT was early spring. We had been traveling for more than twenty-four hours. Passengers with tickets for more or less distant places had been entering and leaving our carriage, but there were four of us who had been on the train from the very start:—a weary-faced lady, neither beautiful nor young, who wore a hat and a semi-masculine paletot, and smoked cigarettes; her companion, a talkative man of forty, with neat, new luggage; and thirdly a rather short and very reserved gentleman not by any means old, but with curly hair prematurely turning gray, with very nervous motions, and with extraordinarily brilliant eyes which kept roving from object to object. He wore an old paletot with a lamb's-wool collar, made by an expensive tailor, and a high lamb's-wool hat. Under his paletot, when it was thrown open, were visible a *poddyovka*, or sleeveless kaftan, and a Russian embroidered shirt. The peculiarity of this gentleman consisted in the fact that he from time to time produced strange noises like a cough or like a laugh begun and broken off. This gentleman, during the whole journey, had carefully avoided all acquaintance and intercourse with the other passengers. If any of his neighbors spoke to him, he replied briefly and stiffly, and for the most part he either read or smoked, gazing out of the window, or else, getting



his provisions out of his old sack, drank tea or ate luncheon.

It seemed to me that he was oppressed by his loneliness, and several times I was tempted to speak with him; but whenever our eyes met, as often happened, since we sat diagonally opposite each other, he turned away and devoted himself to his book or looked out of the window.

During one stop at a large station, just before the evening of our second day, this nervous gentleman left the carriage to get some hot water, and made himself some tea. The gentleman with the neat new luggage, a lawyer, as I afterward learned, went out also with the cigarette-smoking lady in the semi-masculine paletot, to drink tea in the station. During the absence of the gentleman and lady several new persons entered our carriage, and among them a tall, closely shaven, wrinkled old man, evidently a merchant, in a shuba of American polecat fur and a cloth cap with a huge vizor. This merchant sat down opposite the lawyer, and immediately entered into conversation with a young man, apparently a merchant's *prikashchik*, or manager, who entered the carriage at the same station.

I was sitting diagonally opposite, and while the train was stationary and no one was passing between us, I could hear snatches of their conversation.

The merchant at first explained that he was on his way to an estate of his which was situated only one station distant. Then, as usual, they began to talk about prices, about trade, and how Moscow does business at the present time; and then they discussed the Fair at Nizhni-Novgorod.

The merchant's clerk began to tell about the merry-making at the Fair, of some rich merchant whom both of them knew; but the old man did not let him finish: he began to tell about the merrymakings which had taken place in former times at Kunavino, and which he himself had enjoyed. He was evidently proud of the share which he had taken in them, and with manifest delight he related how he and this same common acquaint-

tance had once got drunk at Kunavino, and played such tricks that he had to tell about it in a whisper, whereat the clerk burst out in a hearty fit of laughter which filled the whole carriage, and the old man also laughed, displaying two yellow teeth.

Not expecting to hear anything interesting, I got up to go out on the platform till the train should start. At the door I met the lawyer and his lady, talking in a very animated manner as they walked.

"You won't have time," said the sociable lawyer "The second bell will ring in a moment."

And in fact I had not even time to walk to the end of the carriage before the bell rang. When I got back to my place the lively conversation was still going on. The old merchant sat silent in front of them, sternly looking straight ahead, and occasionally expressing his disapprobation by chewing on his teeth.

"Whereupon she explained to her husband up and down" — the lawyer was saying with a smile as I passed them — "that she could not and, moreover, she would not live with him since ...."

And he proceeded to tell something more which I could not hear. Behind me came still other passengers, then came the conductor, followed by a guard on the run, and there was considerable noise for a time, so that I could not hear what they were talking about.

When it grew quieter the lawyer's voice was heard again; but the conversation had evidently gone over from a particular instance to general considerations. The lawyer was saying that the question of divorce was now occupying general attention in Europe, and that with us in Russia the phenomenon was appearing more and more frequently.

Noticing that his voice alone was heard, the lawyer cut his words short, and addressed himself to the old man.

"It did n't use to be so in old times; is n't that so?" he remarked, smiling pleasantly.

The old man was about to make some answer; but at this moment the train started, and, taking off his cap, he

began to cross himself and to whisper a prayer. The lawyer, turning his eyes away, waited politely. Having finished his prayer and crossed himself thrice, the old man put on his cap and pulled it down, settling it in its place, and he began to speak.

"The same thing took place, sir, in old times, only less frequently," said he. "At the present time it can't help happening. People have grown cultured!"

The train, moving along more and more rapidly, thundered over the sleepers, and it was hard for me to hear; but it was interesting, and I took a seat nearer. My neighbor, the nervous, bright-eyed gentleman, was also evidently much interested, and listened, but without moving from his place.

"In what respect are we ill-educated?" asked the lady, with a scarcely perceptible smile. "Do you mean that it would be better for men and women to get married as they used to do in old times, when the bride and bridegroom never even saw each other?" she went on asking, replying after the fashion of many women, not to her neighbor's words, but to the words which she thought he would say.

"People did not know whether they would be able to love each other or not, but married whoever fell to their lot; yes, and often they were tortured their whole lives long! So you think that our old way was the best, do you?" she went on, addressing her discourse to me, and to the lawyer, and least of all to the old man with whom she was talking.

"We have already become very cultured," repeated the merchant, looking scornfully at the lady, and leaving her question unanswered.

"I should like to know how you explain the connection between culture and matrimonial quarrels," said the lawyer, with a scarcely perceptible smile.

The merchant was about to say something, but the lady interrupted him.

"No, that time has already passed," said she. But the lawyer checked her:—

"No, permit him to express his thought." ...

"The absurdities of culture," said the old man, resolutely.

"People who do not love each other marry, and then they wonder that they get along inharmoniously," said the lady, hastily, glancing at the lawyer and then at me, and even at the clerk, who had got up in his seat and was standing with his elbow leaning on the back of the chair, and listening to the conversation with a smile. "You see animals only can be paired off in this way as the master may desire, but men and women have their own individual preferences and attachments," said the lady, evidently wishing to say something severe to the old merchant.

"When you speak thus, you speak to no purpose, madame," said the old man. "Animals are brutes, but man has a law."

"Well, how can one live with a man when there is no love?" insisted the lady, eager to express her opinion, which apparently seemed to her very novel.

"In former times they did not discuss this," said the old man, in a magisterial tone; "it is only a recent development. At any pretext the wife cries out: 'I will leave you.' Even among the peasantry this new method has come into fashion. 'Na,' says the muzhik's wife, 'here are your shirts and drawers, but I am going off with Vanka; his hair is curlier than yours.' Argument is no good. For a woman the first thing needed is fear."

The clerk looked at the lawyer and at the lady and at me, evidently repressing a smile, and ready either to laugh or to approve of the merchant's argument according as it was received by the company.

"Fear of what?" asked the lady.

"Why, of course, fear of her hu-us-band. .... That kind of fear."

"But, batyushka, the day for that sort of thing has gone by," said the lady, with no little asperity.

"No, madame, the time for that can never go by. As Eve the woman was created out of the man's rib, so it will remain till the end of time," said the old man,

and he nodded his head so sternly and triumphantly that the clerk instantly decided that the victory was on the merchant's side, and he burst out into a loud laugh.

"Yes, that is the way you men decide," said the lady, not yielding, and looking at us. "They give themselves full liberty, but you want to keep the woman in the terem.<sup>1</sup> To you, of course, all things are permitted."

"No one gives any such permission, but it is a fact man does not make his family increase, but woman<sup>2</sup> is a fragile vessel," suggested the merchant. The dictatorialness of the merchant's tone evidently impressed his hearers, and even the lady felt crushed, but still she would not give in.

"Yes, but I think you will agree that a woman is a human being, and has feelings as well as a man. Well, then, what is she going to do if she does not love her husband?"

"Not love her husband?" exclaimed the merchant, repeating her words in a savage tone, making a grimace with his lips and his eyebrows. "Never fear, she should come to love him."

This unexpected argument especially pleased the clerk, and he gave vent to a grunt of approbation.

"But that is not so, she may not come to love him," insisted the lady; "and if there is no love, then they ought not to be compelled to this."

"But if a woman is false to her husband, what then?" asked the lawyer.

"That is not to be supposed," said the old man; "he must look out for that."

"But if it does happen, what then? It has occurred."....

"Yes, there are cases, but not among us," said the old man.

All were silent. The clerk changed his position, leaned forward a little more, and evidently wishing not to be left out of the conversation, began with a smile:—

<sup>1</sup> The women's quarters in the ancient Russian *ménage*, which was thoroughly Oriental.

<sup>2</sup> *Zenshchina-zhena*; literally, woman-wife.

"Well, there was a scandal arose in the house of a fine young fellow in our place. It was very hard to decide about it. It happened that the woman was very fond of amusements, and she began to play the devil; but her husband was a reasonable and progressive man. At first she flirted with a counting-house clerk. Her husband argued kindly with her; she would not stop. She did all sorts of dirty tricks and even stole his money. And he flogged her. What good did that do? She only acted worse. Then she had an intrigue with an unchristened Jew, if I may say so. What could he do? He turned her off entirely, and so he lives like a bachelor, and she has become a gadabout."

"That was because he was a fool," said the old man. "If at the very beginning he had not given her her head, but had given her a good sound berating, she would have been all right, I tell you. She must not have her own way at first. Don't trust a horse in the field, or your wife in your house."

At this moment the conductor came along to take up the tickets for the next station. The old man surrendered his.

"Yes," said he, "we've got to restrain the female sex betimes, or else everything will go to ruin."

"Yes, but you were just telling how you married men enjoyed yourselves at the fair at Kunavino," said I, unable to restrain myself.

"That was a personal matter," said the merchant, and he relapsed into silence.

When the whistle sounded the merchant got up, took his bag from under the seat, wrapped his shuba round him, and, lifting his cap, went out to the platform.

## CHAPTER II

As soon as the old man had gone out, several voices spoke up at once.

"An old Testament patriarch," exclaimed the clerk.

"The 'Domostroi'<sup>1</sup> come to life," said the lady. "What savage notions of woman and marriage."

"Yes, indeed, we are still far from the European notions of marriage," said the lawyer.

"Well, the principal thing these men cannot understand," said the lady, "is that marriage without love is not marriage, that love alone consecrates marriage, and that the only true marriage is that which love consecrates."

The clerk listened and smiled, desiring to remember for future use as much as he could of the clever conversation.

In the midst of the lady's sentence, there was heard a sound just behind me like an interrupted laugh or a sob, and looking around we saw my neighbor, the bright-eyed, gray-haired, solitary gentleman, who during the conversation, which had evidently interested him, had unobtrusively drawn near us. He was standing with his hand resting on the back of the seat, and was evidently very much agitated; his face was red and the muscles of his cheek twitched.

"What is that love .... that love .... which consecrates marriage?" he asked, in a stammering voice.

The lady, seeing the agitated state of the speaker, tried to answer him as gently and circumstantially as possible.

"True love. It is that love between a man and a woman which makes marriage possible," said the lady.

"Yes, but what do you mean by true love," said the bright-eyed gentleman, smiling awkwardly and timidly.

"Every one knows what true love is," said the lady, evidently wishing to cut short her speech with him.

"But I don't know," said the gentleman. "You must define what you mean by it."

"Why? .... It is very simple," said the lady, but she hesitated. "Love .... love is the, is the exclusive pref-

<sup>1</sup> The "Domostroi" was the famous code of household manners and customs, compiled probably from earlier treatises by Monk Sylvester, who lived during the reign of Tsar Ivan IV. about the middle of the sixteenth century. It was rediscovered and published in 1849. — ED.

erence which a man or woman feels for one person out of all the rest in the world," said she.

"A preference for how long a time? For a month or two months or half an hour?" asked the gray-haired man, and laughed.

"No, but excuse me, you are evidently not talking about the same thing."

"Yes, I am talking about the same thing."

"She says," interrupted the lawyer, and indicating the lady, "that marriage ought to result in the first place from an attachment, from love, if you will, and that if such a love actually exists, then only marriage furnishes of itself, so to speak, some consecration. Therefore, every marriage where there is no genuine attachment as a foundation — love, if you say so — has no moral obligation. Do I express your idea correctly?" said he, addressing the lady.

The lady by an inclination of her head expressed her concurrence with his interpretation of her idea.

"Therefore ...." the lawyer was about to continue, but the nervous gentleman, with his eyes all on fire, evidently restraining himself with difficulty, began, without allowing the lawyer to proceed:—

"No, I *am* speaking about the same thing, about the preference that one man or one woman has for one person above all others, and I simply ask, 'How long is this preference to last?'"

"How long? why, sometimes it lasts a whole lifetime," said the lady, shrugging her shoulders.

"Yes, but that is true only in novels, but never in real life. In real life this preference for one person rather than another may occasionally last for a year, more frequently it is measured by months, or even by weeks or days or hours," said he, evidently knowing that he was surprising every one by his opinion, and well satisfied with it.

"Oh, what are you saying?" .... "No, excuse me!" .... "Oh, no!" three of us exclaimed with one voice. Even the clerk uttered a disapproving grunt.

"Yes, I know," interrupted the gray-haired gentleman



"You are speaking of what is supposed to exist, but I am speaking of what does exist. Every man feels for every pretty woman what you call love."

"Oh, what you say is awful. Surely there exists among human beings that feeling which is called love, and which lasts not merely for months and years, but for whole lives!"

"No, I don't admit it. If it is granted even that a man may keep his preference for a given woman all his life, the woman in all probability will prefer some one else, and so it always has been in the world and always will be," said he; and, taking out a cigarette-case, he began to smoke.

"But it may be reciprocal," said the lawyer.

"No, it is impossible," he insisted, "just as impossible as that in a load of peas there should be two peas exactly alike, side by side. And over and above this improbability there is also the likelihood of satiety. That one or the other should love the same person a whole life long is as to say that a single candle would burn forever," said he, eagerly drawing in the smoke of his cigarette.

"But you are talking about carnal love; don't you admit that there is a love based on a unity of ideals, on a spiritual affinity?" asked the lady.

"Spiritual affinity! Unity of ideals!" repeated he, emitting his peculiar sound. "But in that case there is no reason why we should not sleep together, — excuse my brutality, — why, it is the very consequence of this unity of ideals that people go to bed together," said he, and he laughed nervously.

"But pardon me," said the lawyer, "what you say is contradicted by the facts. .... We see that marriage exists, that all the human race, or the majority of it, lives a married life, and many live honorably all their days under the marriage relation."

The gray-haired gentleman again laughed.

"You were just saying that marriage is founded on love, but when I expressed my doubt of the existence of love except the sentimental kind, you try to prove the

existence of love by the fact that marriages exist. But marriages in our day are all falsehood."

"Oh, no, excuse me," exclaimed the lawyer; "I only say that marriages have always existed and still exist."

"Exist? Yes, but why do they exist? They have existed and exist for people who see in marriage something sacred — a sacrament which is entered into before God — for such people it exists. Among us, people get married, seeing nothing in marriage except copulation, and the result is either deception or violence. When it is deception it is easy to endure. Husband and wife only deceive people into believing that they are living a monogamous marriage, but they are really practising polygamy and polyandry. It is filthy, but still it is the fashion, but when, as happens oftener than otherwise, men take on themselves an external obligation to live together all their lives long, — and even from the second month they hate each other, desire to separate, and yet they go on living, — then results that terrible hell from which they try to escape by intoxication, by fighting duels, by killing and poisoning themselves and others," said he, talking more and more rapidly, and growing more and more excited. It was embarrassing.

"Yes, without doubt there are critical episodes in married life," said the lawyer, wishing to cut short this unseemly and exciting conversation.

"I imagine you have guessed who I am," said the gray-haired gentleman, quietly and with a certain appearance of calmness.

"No, I have not that pleasure."

"The pleasure will not be great. My name is Pozdnushef; I am the man in whose life happened that critical episode to which you just hinted — the episode of a man killing his wife," said he, swiftly glancing at each one of us.

No one found anything to say, and we all kept silence.

"Well, it is immaterial," said he, emitting his peculiar grunt. "However, excuse me, I will not trouble you any more."

"Don't mention it," said the lawyer, himself not knowing exactly what he was saying.

But Pozdnushchikoff, not heeding him, quickly turned round and went back to his place. The gentleman talked in whispers with the lady. I sat down with Pozdnushchikoff and said nothing, as I was unable to think of anything to say to him. It was too dark to read, and so I shut my eyes and pretended that I was going to sleep.

Thus we rode in silence till we reached the next station. At that station the gentleman and lady were transferred to another carriage, concerning which they had arranged beforehand with the conductor. The merchant's superintendent got into a comfortable position on his sofa and went to sleep. Pozdnushchikoff kept smoking, and drank his tea, which he got boiling hot at the station.

When I opened my eyes and looked at him, he suddenly turned to me with an expression of resolution and exasperation:—

"Maybe it is disagreeable for you to be sitting with me, now that you know who I am. If that is so, I will leave you."

"Oh, not at all, I beg of you."

"Well, then, would n't you like some? Only it is rather strong."

And he poured me out some tea.

"They say .... but then they all lie ...." said he.

"What are you speaking about?" I asked.

"Always about the same thing—about 'love'—and what people mean by it. Don't you want to sleep?"

"Not at all."

"Then, if you would like, I will relate to you how I was led by this very same kind of love to do what I did."

"I should indeed, unless it would be painful for you."

"No, it is hard for me to hold my tongue. You drink your tea—or is it too strong for you?"

The tea was really like beer, but I drank a glass of it

At this moment the conductor came along. Pozdnushet silently followed him with angry eyes, and did not begin until he had left the car.

### CHAPTER III

"WELL, then, I will tell you. But are you sure you would like to have me?"

I assured him that I was very eager to hear him. He remained silent, rubbed his face with his hands, and began:—

"If I tell you, I must begin at the very beginning, I must tell you how and why I got married, and what I was before I married.

"Up to the time of my marriage I lived as all men live; that is, all the men in my circle. I am a landed proprietor and a university graduate, and I have been marshal of the nobility. Up to the time of my marriage I lived as all men live,—a dissipated life; and, like all the young men of our circle, though living a dissipated life, I was persuaded that I was living as I ought. Regarding myself, I thought that I was a charming person, that I was a perfectly moral man. I was no vulgar seducer, I had no unnatural tastes, I did not make this sort of thing my chief object in life, as did many of my intimates; I indulged in dissipation only moderately, decently, for my health's sake; I avoided such women as might, by the birth of a child, or by the force of attachment to me, entangle me. However, there may have been children and there may have been attachments; but I acted as if there was nothing of the sort, I not only considered this sort of thing moral, but I was proud of it."

He paused, emitted his peculiar sound, as he apparently always did when a new thought occurred to him.

"And precisely here is the chief viciousness of it all," he cried. "Depravity does not lie in anything physical; depravity does not imply any physical deformity; depravity, genuine depravity, consists in freeing oneself

from the moral relations to women with whom you enter into physical relations. And this emancipation I arrogated to myself as a virtue. I remember how one time I tormented myself because I had not paid a woman, who apparently loved me and had given herself to me, and I was only rendered happy again when I sent her the money, so as to show her thereby that I did not consider myself morally bound to her. Do not shake your head as if you agreed with me," he suddenly cried. "You see I know that kind of trick. All of you, in the best circumstances, unless you are a rare exception, have just such views as I had then. Well, no matter, please excuse me," he went on. "But this is the whole trouble and it is awful! awful! awful!"

"What is awful?" I asked.

"The abyss of error in which we live in relation to women, and our relations to them. It is true I cannot talk with any calmness in regard to this, and the reason I cannot is that episode which took place in my life. But ever since that episode occurred, my eyes have been opened, and I have seen everything in an entirely different light — exactly the opposite — exactly the opposite."

He smoked his cigarette, and, leaning his elbows on his knees, went on talking again. In the darkness I could not see his face, but above the rattle and rumble of the train I could hear his suggestive, pleasant voice.

## CHAPTER IV

"YES, only by tormenting myself as I have, only by means of this have I learned where the root of the whole trouble is; have I learned what must be, and therefore have come to see the whole horror of what is.

"Now be kind enough to see, just here, how and when began that which led me to that episode of which I have spoken. It began when I was not quite sixteen years old. It happened when I was still in the gymna-

sium, and my oldest brother was a student in the first class. I had not known women at that time, but like all the unfortunate boys of our circle, I was by no means an innocent child. Two years before I had been corrupted by coarse boys; already woman, not any particular woman, but woman as a sweet something, woman, any woman — woman in her nakedness — had already begun to torment me. My solitudes were unchaste. I was tormented as ninety-nine per cent of our boys are tormented. I was horror-struck, I struggled, I prayed, and — I fell! My imagination was already corrupt. I, myself, was corrupt, but the final step had not yet been taken. I was ruined by myself, even before I had put my hands on another human being. But here a comrade of my brother, a gay young student, a so-called 'good fellow,' — in other words the greatest good-for-nothing possible, — who had already taught us to drink and to play cards, persuaded us after a drinking-bout to go *there*.

"We went. My brother also had been innocent, and he fell the same night; and I, a boy of fifteen, polluted myself and accomplished the pollution of a woman, not at all understanding the enormity of what I was doing. You see I had never heard from any of my elders that what I was doing was wrong. And even now no one ever hears so. To be sure it is contained in the Ten Commandments, but the Ten Commandments seem to be used only in order to pass the priest's examination, and even then are not regarded as very important. not nearly so much so as the rule for the use of *ut* in conditional sentences.

"Thus I had never heard a single one of my elders, whom I respected, say that this was wrong. On the contrary, I heard men whom I respected declare that it was a good thing. I heard them say that my struggles and sufferings would be relieved after that. I heard it, and I read it, and heard my elders say that it was good for the health; from my comrades I heard that there was merit, that there was gallantry, in such conduct. So that, as a rule, there is nothing to be

anticipated from it except beneficial effects. Danger of disease? But even that you see is taken care of. A solicitous government looks out for that. It looks after and regulates the activity of houses of 'indulgence,' and makes lewdness safe for gymnasium students. And doctors for a consideration do the same. Thus it comes about. They affirm that lewdness is good for the health, they make a regular institution of lewdness. I know of mothers who see to it that their sons' health is regulated in this way. And Science follows them into the houses of 'indulgence.'"

"Why Science?" I asked.

"What are doctors? The priests of Science. Who corrupt young men, declaring that this thing is necessary for the health? They do.

"But it is certain that if one per cent of the energy that is employed in the cure of syphilis were expended in the eradication of lewdness, syphilis would long ago have become only a memory. But instead the energy is expended, not in the eradication of lewdness, but in the guaranteeing the safety of lewdness. Well, that is not the trouble. The trouble consists in this, that with me, as with nine out of ten, if not even more, not only of our class, but of all, even of the peasantry, the horrible fact exists that I fell, not by reason of yielding to a single temptation of the charm of any special woman — no, no special woman led me astray; but I fell because those immediately around me saw, in what was really a fall, some a lawful act, a regulator advantageous for the health, others, a most natural and not only simple, but even innocent, diversion for a young man.

"I did not even realize that this was a fall; I simply began to give myself up to those pleasures, to those necessities, which, as it was suggested to me, were peculiar to a certain degree of lewdness, — gave myself up to this form of dissipation just as I had begun to drink and to smoke. And yet there was something peculiar and pathetic in this first fall. I well remember how immediately, even before I left that room, a feeling

of sadness, of deep sadness, came over me, so that I felt like weeping, weeping the loss of my innocence, for a forever sullied relationship to womanhood. Yes, the natural, simple relationship that I had enjoyed with women was for evermore impossible. Purity of relationship with any woman was at an end, and could never be again. I had become what is called a libertine. And to be a libertine is to be in a physical condition like that of a morphiomaniac, a drunkard, or a smoker. As the morphiomaniac, the drunkard, the smoker, is no longer a normal man, so a man who uses women for his own pleasure is no longer normal, but is a man forever spoiled — is a libertine. As the drunkard and the morphiomaniac can be instantly recognized by his face, by his actions, so it is with the rake. The libertine may restrain himself, may struggle with his inclinations, but his simple, pure, frank, and fraternal relations with woman are no longer possible. By the very way in which he looks at a young woman, and stares at her, the libertine is to be recognized. And I became a libertine, and I remained one, and that was my ruin.

## CHAPTER V

"YES, so it was. So it went farther and farther, and every kind of depravity ensued. My God! When I remember all my abominable actions in this particular, I am overwhelmed with horror. I also remember how my comrades used to laugh at my so-called innocence. And when you hear about our gilded youth, our officers, our young Parisians ....

"And all these gentlemen, and I, when we, libertines of thirty, having on our souls hundreds of the most varied and horrible crimes against woman, when we, rakes of thirty, come into the drawing-room or the ball-room, freshly washed, cleanly shaven, well-perfumed, in immaculate linen, in evening dress or uniform — what emblems of purity, how charming we are! ....

"Just think what ought to be and what is! It ought



to be that when such a gentleman comes into the society of my sister, or my daughter, I, knowing about his life, what it is, should go to him, draw him quietly to one side, and say in a confidential whisper:—

“‘Galubchik, you see I know exactly how you are living, how you are spending your nights and with whom. This is no place for you. Here are pure, innocent women and girls. Please go.’

“So it ought to be; but in reality, when such a gentleman makes his appearance, or when he dances with my sister or my daughter, clasping her in his arms, we rejoice if he is rich and well connected. Perhaps he honors my daughter after Rigolbozh. Even if traces of his disease still remain, it is of no consequence, the cure is easy nowadays. I know that some girls of the highest society have been given by their parents with enthusiasm to men affected with certain diseases. Oh, what rottenness! But the time is coming when this rottenness and falsehood will be cured.”

Several times he emitted his strange noises and sipped his tea. His tea was terribly strong. There was no water at hand to weaken it. I was conscious that the two glasses which I had drunk had greatly excited my nerves. The tea also must have had a great effect on him, because he kept growing more and more excited. His voice kept growing louder and more energetic. He kept changing his position; at one moment he would pick up his hat, then he would put it on again; and his face kept strangely changing in the twilight in which we were sitting.

“Well, that was the way I lived until I was thirty years of age, never for a moment abandoning my intention of getting married and arranging for myself the most lofty and unsullied existence, and with this end in view I looked at every girl who came under observation,” he continued. “I was soiled with the rottenness of lewdness, and at the same time I was looking round for a girl who by her purity might meet my demands. Many of them I instantly rejected on the ground that they were not sufficiently pure for me; at last I found

one whom I thought worthy of me. She was one of the two daughters of a man in the government of Penza, who had formerly been very rich, but was at that time ruined. One evening, after we had been somewhere in a boat and were returning home by moonlight, and I was sitting next her and admiring her well-proportioned figure, clad in a jersey, and her curly locks, I suddenly made up my mind that she was the one. It seemed to me that evening that she understood everything I felt and thought, and I thought the most elevated thoughts. In reality it was simply the fact that her jersey was especially becoming to her and so were her curls, and that after I had spent a day in her immediate presence I wanted to be still closer to her.

"It is a marvelous thing how full of illusion is the notion that beauty is an advantage. A beautiful woman says all sorts of foolishness, you listen and you do not hear any foolishness, but what you hear seems to you wisdom itself. She says and does vulgar things, and to you it seems lovely. Even when she does not say stupid or vulgar things, but is simply beautiful, you are convinced that she is miraculously wise and moral.

"I returned home enthusiastic, and resolved that she was high above all moral perfection, and that she was therefore fit to be my wife; and the next day I made my proposal.

"See what an entanglement it was. Out of a thousand married men, not only in our rank, but unfortunately also in the people, there is scarcely one who, like Don Juan, would not have been married already not merely ten times, but even a hundred or a thousand times, before the marriage ceremony.

"It is true there are now, so I hear, and I believe it, some young men who live pure lives, feeling and knowing that this is no joke, but a serious matter.

"God help them! But in my time there was not one such out of ten thousand. And all know this and pretend that they do not know it. In all novels the feelings of the heroes, the ponds, the bushes around which they wander, are described in detail; but though their mighty

love to some particular maiden is described, nothing is said about what the interesting hero was doing before, not a word about his frequenting 'houses of indulgence,' about his relations with chambermaids, cooks, and other women. .... Improper novels of this kind — if there are any — are not put into the hands of those who most of all need to know about these things — that is, young women.

"At first they pretend before young women that this form of dissipation, which fills half of the life of our cities, and of our villages also, does not exist at all.

"Afterward they become so accustomed to this hypocrisy that at last they come actually to believe that all of us are moral men and live in a moral world! Girls, poor things, really believe in this with perfect seriousness.

"Thus did my unhappy wife believe. I remember how, after I became engaged to her, I showed her my diary, in which she might learn as much as she would like, even though it were very little, of my past, and especially regarding the last intrigue in which I had been engaged; for she might hear about this from others, and so I felt it necessary to tell her. I remember her horror, her despair, and disillusionment when she knew it all and realized what it meant. I saw that she was tempted to throw me over then. And why did n't she do it?" ...

He emitted his peculiar sound, took another swallow of tea, and paused.

## CHAPTER VI

"No, on the whole it is much better, ever so much better so," he cried. "I deserved it. But that is not the point. I mean that in this business the only persons deceived are the poor unfortunate girls.

"Their mothers certainly know this, their mothers know it as well as any one, because they have been told by their husbands. And they pretend that they believe in the purity of men, though in reality they do not at all. They know by what bait to catch men for themselves

and for their daughters. But you see we men don't know, and we don't know because we don't want to know; but women know perfectly well that the loftiest, and as we call it the most poetic, love depends, not on moral qualities, but on physical proximity and then on the way of doing up the hair, the complexion, the cut of the gown. Ask an experienced coquette who has set herself the task of entrapping a man, which she would prefer to risk: being detected in falsehood, cruelty, even immorality, in the presence of the one whom she is trying to entice, or to appear before him in a badly made or unbecoming gown, — and every time she would choose the first. She knows that man merely lies when he talks about lofty feelings — all he wants is the body — and so he pardons all vulgarities, but he would never pardon an ugly, unbecoming, unfashionable costume.

“The coquette knows this consciously; every innocent girl knows this unconsciously, just as animals know it.

“Hence these abominable jerseys, these tournures, these naked shoulders, arms, and almost bosoms. Women, especially those that have been through the school of marriage, know very well that talk on the highest topics is all talk; but what man wants is the body, and everything which displays it in a deceptive but captivating light, and they act accordingly. If we should once forget that we are accustomed to this indecency which has become second nature, and look at the life of our upper classes as it really is, in all its shamelessness, it would appear like one luxurious ‘house of indulgence.’

“Don't you agree with me? Excuse me, I will prove it to you,” he repeated, not allowing me a chance to speak.

“You say that the women in our society live for other aims than the women in the ‘houses of indulgence,’ but I say that it is not so, and I will prove it to you. If people differ by their aims, by the internal contents of their lives, then this difference will be shown, also, externally, and externally they will be different. But look at these unhappy, these despised women, and then on the ladies of our highest social circles; the same decorations, the same fashions, the same perfumes, the same bare shoul

ders, arms, and bosoms, the same extravagant exhibition of the tournure, the same passion for precious stones, for costly, brilliant things, the same gayeties, dances and music and singing. The methods of allurement used by the ones are used by the others.

## CHAPTER VII

"YES, and I was captured by these jerseys and locks of hair and tournures.

"And it was very easy to capture me, because I had been brought up in those conditions in which young people, like cucumbers under glass, are turned out in love. You see our too abundant and exciting food, coupled with a perfectly idle existence, is nothing else than a systematic incitement to lust. You may be surprised or not, but it is so. I myself have seen nothing of this sort of thing until recently, but now I have seen it. This is the very thing that troubles me, that no one recognizes this, but every one says stupid things like the woman who just got out.

"Yes; not far from where I live some muzhiks were working this spring on the railway. The ordinary fare of the peasantry is meager, — bread, kvas, onions; the muzhik is lively, healthy, and sound. He goes to work on the railway, and his rations consist of kasha and one pound of meat. But in repayment of this he gives back sixteen hours' work, amounting to thirty puds, carried on a wheelbarrow. And it is always so with him.

"But we who eat daily two pounds of meat and game and fish and all kinds of stimulating foods and drinks — how does that go? In sensual excesses. If it goes that way, the safety-valve is open and all is satisfactory; but cut off the safety-valve, — as I kept it covered temporarily, — and immediately there will be an excitement which, coming through the prism of our artificial life, is expressed in a love of the first water, and is sometimes even platonic. And I fell in love as all young men do.

"And everything followed its course: transports and emotions and poetry. In reality, this love of mine was the result, on the one side, of the activity of the mainasha and the dressmakers; on the other, of the superfluity of stimulating food eaten by me in idleness. Had there not been, on the one hand, excursions in boats; had there not been dressmakers with close-fitting gowns, and the like, and had my wife been dressed in some unbecoming capote, and stayed at home, and had I, on the other hand, been a man in normal conditions, eating only as much food as I needed for my work, and had my safety-valve been open, — but then it chanced to be temporarily closed, — I should not have fallen in love, and there would not have been any trouble.

## CHAPTER VIII

"WELL, so it went on. My rank and fortune and good clothes and excursions in boats did the business. Twenty times it does not succeed, but this time it succeeded like a trap. I am not jesting. You see, nowadays marriages are always arranged like traps. Do you see how natural it is? The girl has arrived at maturity, and must be married. What could be more simple when the girl is not a monster, and there are men who wish to get married? This is the way it used to be done. The girl has reached the right age; her parents arrange a marriage. Thus it has been done, thus it is done throughout the world; among the Chinese, the Hindus, the Mahometans, and among the common Russian people; thus it is managed among at least ninety-nine per cent of the human race. It is only among a small one per cent, among us libertines and debauchees, that this custom has been found to be bad, and we have invented another. Now, what is this new way? It is this: the girls sit round, and the men come as at a bazaar and take their choice. And the girls wait and wonder, and have their own ideas, but they dare not say: 'Batyushka, take me, — no, me —

not her, but me; look, what shoulders and all the rest.'

"And we, the men, walk by and stare at them and are satisfied. 'I know a thing or two, I am not caught.' They go by, they look, they are satisfied that this is all arranged for their special benefit. 'Look, don't get taken in — here's your chance!'"

"What is to be done, then?" I asked. "You would not have the young women make the offers, would you?"

"Well, I can't exactly say how; only if there is to be equality, then let it be equality. If it is discovered that the system of the go-between<sup>1</sup> is humiliating, still this is a thousand times more so. Then the rights and chances were equal, but in our method the woman is either a slave in a bazaar, or the bait in the trap. You tell any mother or the girl herself the truth, that she is only occupied in husband-catching, — my God, what an insult! But the truth is they do this, and they have nothing else to do. And what is really dreadful is to see poor, and perfectly innocent, young girls engaged in doing this very thing. And again, it would not be so bad if it were only done openly, but it is all deception.

"Ah, the origin of species, how interesting it is! Ah, Lily is greatly interested in painting.' — And shall you be at the exhibition? How instructive! And the troika rides and the theater and the symphony. Oh, how remarkable — 'My Lily is crazy over music!' 'And why don't you share these views?' And then the boat rides. And always one thought: — 'Take me, take my Lily. No, me!' 'Just try your luck!' Oh, vileness, oh, falsehood!" he concluded; and, swallowing the last of his tea, proceeded to gather together his cups and utensils.

<sup>1</sup> *Svatovstvo*, whereby in early Russian custom some relative or friend acted as the *svakha*, or match-maker, to arrange the marriage.

## CHAPTER IX

"Do you know," he began, while he was packing up his tea and sugar in his bag, "the domination of women, which is the cause of the sufferings of the world, all proceeds from this?"

"How the domination of women?" I asked. "All rights, the majority of rights, belong to men."

"Yes, yes, that is the very thing," he exclaimed, interrupting me. "That is the very thing I wanted to say to you, and that is just what explains the extraordinary phenomenon that on the one side it is perfectly true that woman is reduced to the lowest degree of humiliation; on the other, she is the queen. Just exactly as the Jews, by their pecuniary power, avenge themselves for their humiliation, so it is with women. 'Ah, you want us to be merely merchants; very well, we as merchants will get you under our feet,' say the Jews. 'Ah, you wish us to be merely the objects of sensuality; very well, we as objects of sensual pleasure will make you our slaves,' say the women. A woman's lack of rights does not consist in the fact that she cannot vote or sit as judge, — for rights are not embraced in any such activities, — but in the fact that in sexual intercourse she is not the equal of the man: she must have the right to enjoy the man or to keep him at a distance according to her fancy, she must be able to choose her husband according to her own desire, instead of being the one chosen.

"You say that this would be unbecoming; very good, then let the man cease to have these rights. Now the woman lacks the right which the man possesses. And now, in order to get back this right, she acts on the passions of man; by means of his passions, she subdues him so that, while ostensibly he chooses, she is really the one. And having once got hold of this means, she abuses it, and acquires a terrible power over men."

"Yes, but where is this special power?" I asked.

"Where? Everywhere, in everything. Go in any



large city among the shops. Millions there. You could estimate the amount of human labor expended in them, but in ninety per cent of these shops what will you find intended for men? All the luxury of life is demanded and maintained by women. Reckon up all the factories. The vast proportion of them are manufacturing unprofitable adornments, such as carriages, furniture, trinkets, for women. Millions of men, generations of slaves, perish in the galley-slave work in factories merely for the caprice of women. Women, like tsaritsas, hold as prisoners in slavery and hard labor about ninety per cent of the human race. And all this because they have been kept down, deprived of their equal rights with men. And so they avenge themselves by acting on our passions, by ensnaring us in their nets. Yes, everything comes from that.

"Women have made of themselves such a weapon for attacking the senses of men, that a man cannot with any calmness be in a woman's company. As soon as a man approaches a woman, he falls under the influence of her deviltry, and grows foolish.<sup>1</sup> And there always used to be something awkward and painful, when I saw a lady dressed in a ball-gown; but now it is simply terrible. I regard it as something dangerous for men and contrary to law, and I feel the impulse to call for the police, to summon protection from the peril, to demand that the dangerous object be removed and put out of sight.

"Yes, you are laughing," he cried, "but this is no joke at all. I am convinced that the time is coming and perhaps very soon when men will recognize this and will be amazed that a society could exist in which actions so subversive to social quietude were permitted as those adornments of their body, permitted to women of our circle and meant to appeal to the passions. It is exactly the same as if all kinds of traps should be placed

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Fall under her *durman*," thorn-apple, stramonium: a word which contains the root *dur*, foolish. The popular question, "*Durmanu chto li tui obyelsa?*" — Why have you gormandized on a thorn-apple? — means that you are regarded as crazy. — Tr.

along our promenades and roads — it is worse than that. Why should games of chance be forbidden, and women not be forbidden to dress in a way to appeal to the passions? It is a thousand times more dangerous.

## CHAPTER X

“Now, then, you understand me. I was what is called ‘in love.’ I not only imagined her as absolute perfection, I also imagined myself at the time of my marriage as absolute perfection. You see there is no scoundrel who is not able by searching to find a scoundrel in some respects worse than himself, and who therefore would not find an excuse for pride and self-satisfaction. So it was with me: I was not marrying for money, it was not a question of advantage with me as it was with the majority of my acquaintances, who married either for money or connections: I was rich, she was poor. That is one thing. Another thing which afforded me reason for pride was the fact that, while other men married with the intention of continuing to live in the same polygamy as they had enjoyed up to the time of their marriage, I had firmly resolved to live after my marriage as a monogamist, and my pride had no bounds in consequence of this resolution. Yes, I was a frightful hog, but I imagined that I was an angel!

“The time between my betrothal and my marriage was not very long. But I cannot remember that period of my engagement without shame. How vile it was! You see love is represented as spiritual and not sensual. Well, if it is love, it is spiritual; if it is a spiritual communion, then this spiritual intercourse ought to be expressed in words, in conversations, in colloquies. There was nothing of this. It used to be awfully hard to talk when we were alone together. What a labor of Sisyphus it used to be! No sooner had we thought of something to say and said it, than we would have to be silent and it would be necessary to think of something else. There was nothing to talk about. Everything

that might be said of the life awaiting us, our arrangements, our plans, had been said, and what was there more? You see, if we had been animals then we should have known that it was not expected of us to talk; but here, on the contrary, it was necessary to talk, but there was nothing to say because what really interested us could not be expressed in words.

"And, moreover, there was that abominable custom of eating bonbons, that coarse gluttony, that gormandizing on sweets, and all those vile preparations for marriage; discussions about rooms, apartments, beds, night-gowns, khalats, linen, and toilets. Now you will admit that, if marriages were arranged in accordance with the 'Domostroï,' as that old man said, then the cushions, the dowry, the bed, and all that sort of thing would be merely particulars corresponding with the sacrament. But among us, when out of ten men who go to the altar probably scarcely nine believe, not merely in the sacrament, but do not even believe that what they are doing is anything binding; when out of a hundred men there is scarcely one who has not been practically married before, and out of fifty not more than one who is not ready to deceive his wife on any convenient pretext; when the majority regard the going to the church as merely a special condition for the possession of a certain woman,—think what a terrible significance, in view of all this, all these details must have! It comes to be something in the nature of a sale. They sell the libertine the innocent girl, and they surround the sale with certain formalities.

## CHAPTER XI

"THAT is the way all get married, and that is the way I got married, and the much-vaunted honeymoon began. What a vile name that is in itself!" he hissed spitefully. "I was making a tour of all the sights of Paris, and I went in to see the bearded woman and a water-dog. It seemed that the one was only a man *décolleté*, in a

woman's gown, and the other was a dog fastened into a walrus-skin and swimming in a bath-tub full of water. The whole thing was very far from interesting; but when I left the place the showman conducted me out very obsequiously, and, addressing the public collected around the entrance, he pointed to me, and said:—

“‘Here, ask this gentleman if it is not worth looking at. Come in, come in, one franc apiece.’

“I was ashamed to say that it was not worth looking at, and the showman evidently counted on that. So is it, undoubtedly, with those that have experienced all the vileness of the honeymoon, and do not dispel the illusions of others. I also refrained from dispelling any one's illusions. But now I do not see why one should not tell the truth. It even seems to me that it is essential to tell the truth about this. It was awkward, shameful, vile, pitiable, and, above all, it was wearisome, unspeakably wearisome. It was something analogous to what I experienced when I was learning to smoke, when I was sick at my stomach and salivated, and I swallowed it down and pretended that it was very pleasant. Just as from that, the delights of marriage, if there are any, will be subsequent; the husband must educate his wife in this vice, in order to procure any pleasure from it.”

“Vice? What do you mean?” I asked. “Why, you are talking about one of the most natural of human functions!”

“Natural?” he exclaimed. “Natural? No, I will tell you that I have come to the conviction that it is not natural. Nay, it is perfectly unnatural. Ask children, ask an innocent young girl.

“You said ‘natural.’

“It is natural to eat. And it is agreeable, easy, and jolly, and not at all shameful, to eat; but this is vile and shameful and painful. No, it is not natural. And the pure maiden, I am convinced, will always hate it.”

“But how,” I asked, “how would the human race be perpetuated?”

“Well, why should not the human race perish?” he asked, with a touch of savage irony, as if he were expect-

ing this unfair reply, as if he had heard it before. "Preach abstinence from procreation in the name of making it always possible for English lords to gormandize, and it will go! Preach abstinence from procreation in the name of giving a greater pleasure, it will go! But try to persuade people to refrain from procreation in the name of morality — ye fathers! <sup>1</sup> what an outcry! The human race would not be extinguished, because an attempt was made to keep men from being swine. However, excuse me! this light is disagreeable to me; may I shade it?" he asked, pointing to the lamp.

I said that it was immaterial to me, and then — hastily, as in everything he did — he got up on the seat, and pulled down the woolen shade to the lamp.

"Nevertheless," said I, "if all men should adopt this for a law, the human race would be annihilated."

He did not immediately reply.

"You ask: 'How would the human race be perpetuated?'" said he, again taking his seat opposite me, and spreading his legs wide apart, and resting his elbows on his knees. "Why should it be continued — this human race of ours?" he exclaimed.

"Why do you ask such a question? Otherwise there would be no more of us."

"Well, why should there be?"

"What a question — why, to live, of course."

"But why should we live? If here is no other aim, if life was given only to perpetuate life, then there is no reason why we should live. And if this is so, then the Schopenhauers and Hartmanns, and all the Buddhists as well, are perfectly right. Now, if there is a purpose in life, then it is clear that life ought to come to an end when that purpose is attained. This is the logic of it," said he, with evident agitation, and seeming to set a high value on his thought. "This is the logic of it. Observe: if the aim of mankind is happiness, goodness, love if you prefer; if the aim of mankind is what is said in the prophecies that all men are to unite themselves in universal love, that the spears are to be

<sup>1</sup> *Batyushki!*

beaten into pruning-hooks and the like, then what stands in the way of the attainment of this aim? Human passions do! Of all passions, the most powerful and vicious and obstinate is sexual, carnal love; and so if passions are annihilated and with them the last and most powerful, carnal love, then the prophecy will be fulfilled, men will be united together, the aim of mankind will have been attained, and there would be no longer any reason for existence. As long as humanity exists, this ideal will be before it, and of course this is not the ideal of rabbits or of pigs, which is to propagate as rapidly as possible, and it is not the ideal of monkeys or of Parisians, which is to enjoy all the refinements of sexual passion, but it is the ideal of goodness attained by self-restraint and chastity. Toward this men are now striving, and always have striven. And see what results.

"It results that sexual love is the safety-valve. If the human race does not as yet attain this aim, it is simply because there are passions, and the strongest of them the sexual. But since there is sexual passion, a new generation comes along, and of course there is always the possibility that the aim may be attained by some succeeding generation. But as long as it is not attained, then there will be other generations until the aim is attained, until the prophecies are fulfilled, until all men are joined in unity. And then what would be the result?

"If it be granted that God created men for the attainment of a certain end, then He must have created them mortal, without sexual passion, or immortal. If they were mortal, but without sexual passion, then what would be the result?—this: that they would live without attaining their aim, and then would die, so that, to attain the aim, God would have to create new men. But if they were immortal, then let us suppose—although it is harder for those men to correct mistakes and approach perfection than it is for the new generations—let us suppose, I say, that they reached their goal after many thousand years; but then, why should they? What good would the rest of their lives be to them? It is better as it is!....

"But perhaps you do not approve this form of expres

sion, perhaps you are an evolutionist. Even then it comes to the same thing. The highest genus of animals, men, in order to get the advantage in the conflict with other creatures, must band together, like a hive of bees, and not propagate irregularly; must also, like the bees, nourish the sexless ones; in other words, must struggle toward continence, and never allow the kindling of the carnal lusts to which the whole arrangement of our life is directed."

He paused.

"Will the human race come to an end? Can any one who looks at the world as it is have the slightest doubt of it? Why, it is just as certain as death is certain. We find the end of the world inculcated in all the teachings of the Church, and in all the teachings of Science it is likewise shown to be inevitable.

## CHAPTER XII

"IN our society it is just exactly reversed: if a man has felt it incumbent on him to be continent during his bachelorhood, then always after he is married he feels it no longer necessary to restrain himself. You see, the wedding journeys, this retirement to solitude which young people with the sanction of their parents practise, are nothing else than a sanction for lewdness. But the moral law when it is broken brings its own punishment.

"In spite of all my endeavors to make my honeymoon a success, it was a failure. The whole time was merely vile, shameful, and tiresome. But very soon it became also painfully oppressive. This state of things began almost at the first. I think it was on the third or fourth day, I found my wife depressed, and I began to inquire what was the matter, began to put my arms around her, which I supposed was all she could possibly desire; but she pushed away my arm and burst into tears.

"What was it? She could not tell me. But she

was depressed and down-hearted. Probably her highly wrought nerves whispered to her the truth as to the ignominy of our relations, but she could not tell me. I began to question her; she said something about being homesick for her mother. It seemed to me that this was not the truth. I tried to console her, but said nothing about her mother. I did not realize that she was simply bored, and that her mother was merely a pretext.

"But she immediately complained because I said nothing about her mother, as if I did not believe her. She told me that she could see I did not love her. I accused her of caprice, and immediately her face changed; in place of melancholy appeared exasperation, and she began in the bitterest terms to charge me with egotism and cruelty.

"I looked at her. Her whole face expressed the utmost coldness and hostility, almost hatred of me. I remember how alarmed I was on seeing this.

" 'How is this? What does it mean?' I asked myself; 'love is the union of souls, and instead of this what have we here? Why, it cannot be, this is not she.'

"I did my best to soothe her, but I came up against such an insuperable wall of cold, venomous hostility that, before I had time to think, something like exasperation took possession of me also, and we said to each other a quantity of disagreeable words. The impression of this first quarrel was horrible. I called it a quarrel, but it was not a quarrel; it was really only the discovery of the gulf which was in reality between us. Our passionate love had worn itself out in the satisfaction of the senses, and therefore we remained facing each other as we really were, in other words, two egotists alien to each other, desirous each of getting the greatest possible pleasure out of the other!

"I called what took place between us a quarrel, but it was not a quarrel; it was only the consequence of the cessation of our sensuality, disclosing our actual relation to each other. I did not realize that this cold and hostile relationship was our normal relation. I did not understand this because this hostility, in the first



weeks of our marriage, was very quickly hidden again from us by the rising of a newly distilled sensuality, that is to say, passionate love.

"And so I thought that we had quarreled and become reconciled, and that this would be the end of it. But in the very first month, during our honeymoon, very quickly came another period of satiety, and again we ceased to be necessary to each other, and another quarrel ensued. The second quarrel surprised me even more than the first. I said to myself:—

"Of course the first could not have been the result of chance, but had to be the result of necessity, and so with this, and there will be others.'

"The second quarrel surprised me the more because it proceeded from the most trivial cause—something pecuniary; but I never grudged money, and certainly could never have grudged any to my wife. I only remember that she made some remark of mine seem to be the expression of my desire to control her through money to which I claimed an exclusive right—something impossible, stupid, cowardly, and natural neither to her nor to me.

"I grew angry, and began to reproach her for her lack of delicacy; she returned the charge, and so it went on as before. And I perceived in her words, and in the expression of her face and her eyes, the same harsh, cold hostility as had surprised me the first time. I remember having quarreled with my brother, my friend, even my father; but never did there arise between us such a peculiar venomous anger as was manifested now. But after a short time our mutual reciprocal hatred concealed itself again under our passionate love, that is, our sensuality, and I once more cherished the notion that these two quarrels had been mistakes which might be rectified.

"But when the third and the fourth quarrel ensued, I came to believe that it was not a mere chance, but that it had to be, and that it would still be so, and I was horror-struck at what was before me. In this connection I was tormented by the horrible idea that I was the only person who had this misfortune, and that no other

couple had any such experiences as I was having with my wife. I had not then found out that this is a common lot — that all men think, just as I did, that it is a misfortune exclusively peculiar to them, and so conceal this exclusive and shameful misfortune, not only from others but also from themselves, and are unwilling to acknowledge it.

“It began with us at the very first and kept on all the time, and grew more severe and more bitter. In the depths of my soul I from the very first felt that I was lost, that marriage had not turned out at all as I had expected, that it was not only not a happiness, but was something very oppressive; but, like all other men, I was not willing to acknowledge this — and I should not acknowledge it even now, had it not been for the sequel — and I concealed it not only from others, but even from myself.

“Now I am amazed that I did not recognize my real position. It might have been seen in the fact that our quarrels sprang from causes so trivial that afterward, when they were ended, it was impossible to remember what brought them about. Reason was not quick enough to sophisticate sufficient pretexts for the hostility that constantly existed between us.

“But still more amazing was the insufficiency of the pretexts for reconciliation. Occasionally it was a word or an explanation, even tears, but sometimes .... oh, how shameful it is to remember it now! after the bitterest words exchanged, suddenly would come silence, glances, smiles, kisses, embraces! .... Fu! abomination. Why was it that I failed to see all the vileness of this even then?” ....

## CHAPTER XIII

Two passengers entered and began to settle themselves at the end of the carriage. He ceased speaking while they were taking their places, but as soon as they became quiet he went on with his story, never for an instant losing the thread of his thoughts.

"What is chiefly vile about this," he went on to say, "is that it is taken for granted in theory that love is something ideal and elevated; whereas, in practice, love is something low and swinish, which it is shameful and disgusting to speak of or remember. You see, it was not without reason that nature made it shameful and disgusting. But if it is shameful and disgusting, then it ought to be so much the more to be made known. But with us, on the contrary, people pretend that what is low and shameful and disgusting is beautiful and elevated.

"What were the first symptoms of my love? Why, these—that I gave myself up to animal excesses, not only not feeling any shame at it, but feeling a certain pride at the possibility of these animal excesses, not thinking either of her spiritual life or even of her physical life. I wondered what was the cause of our animosity to each other, but the thing was perfectly clear: this animosity was nothing else than the protest of human nature against the animal which was crushing it. I was amazed at our hatred of each other. But you see it could not have been otherwise. This hatred was nothing else than identical with the hatred felt by the accomplices in a crime, both for the instigation and for the accomplishment of the deed. What else was it than a crime, when she, poor thing, became pregnant within the first month and our swinish relations continued.

"You think that I am wandering from my story? Not at all. I am all the time relating to you *how* I killed my wife. .... At my trial I was asked why and how I killed her. .... Fools! they think that I killed her with a dagger on the seventeenth of October. I did not kill her then, but long before. In exactly the same way they are all killing their wives now, all, all." ....

"How so?" I asked.

"It is something amazing that no one wishes to know what is so clear and evident—what doctors ought to know and to proclaim, but they hold their tongues. You see, it is really awfully simple! Men and women are like animals, and they are so created that after sexual

union pregnancy begins, then suckling — a condition of things during which sexual union is dangerous both for the woman and for the child. The number of women and of men is about even: what does that signify? Of course it is clear. It does not require great wisdom to draw from these things the conclusion which animals also draw — that continence is necessary. But no! Science has gone so far as to discover certain corpuscles which run about in the blood, and all sorts of useless stupidities, but it cannot comprehend this yet. At least it is not rumored about that Science is saying this.

“And now for women there are only two methods of escape: one is by making monsters of themselves, by destroying or annihilating in themselves, according to the requirements of the case, the faculty of being women, that is to say, mothers, so that men may have no interruption of their enjoyment. The second escape is not an escape at all, but a simple, brutal, direct violation of the laws of nature. Such is constantly taking place in all so-called virtuous families, and it is this: the woman, in direct opposition to her nature, is obliged while bearing and nursing a child to be at the same time her husband's mistress, is obliged to be what no other animal ever permits. And she can't have the strength for it.

“Hence in our social sphere hysteria and nerves, and among the people women possessed. You have observed among girls, pure girls I mean, there is no such thing as ‘possession’; it is only among peasant women and among women who live with their husbands. So it is with us. And it is exactly the same in Europe. All the hospitals are full of hysterical women, who have broken the laws of nature. And these possessed women and the patients of Charcot are perfect cripples, and the world is full of half-crippled women. Only to think, what a mighty thing is taking place in a woman when she has conceived, or when she is nursing a baby. That which is growing is to continue ourselves, is to take our place. And this holy function is violated — for what? It is terrible to think about it. And yet they talk about

the freedom, the rights, of women! It is just the same as if cannibals should feed up their prisoners for food, and at the same time talk, assert, that they were working for their freedom and rights."

All this was new, and surprised me.

"But what would you do?" I exclaimed. "If this came about, then a husband could have intercourse with his wife only once in two years; but a man ...."

"Yes, yes, a man must have it," said he, taking the words out of my mouth. "Again, the priests of Science support you in your views. Suggest to a man that vodka, tobacco, opium, are indispensable to him, and all that sort of thing will become indispensable to him. It means that God did not understand what was needful, and that therefore, as He did not ask advice of the magi, he arranged things badly. Pray observe, the thing does not hang together. It is needful, it is indispensable, for a man to satisfy his carnal desires — so they decide; but here comes in the question of conception and nursing babies, which prevents the satisfaction of this necessity. How is the difficulty to be overcome? How manage it? Why! go to the magi; they will arrange it. They have thought it all out. Oh! when shall these magi be dethroned from their deceptions? It is time! You see how far things have already gone; men become mad and shoot themselves, and all from this one cause. And how could it be otherwise? Animals seem to know that their progeny perpetuate their kind, and they observe a certain law in this respect. Only man has not the wisdom to know this, and does not wish to know it. All he cares for is to have the greatest possible pleasure. And who is he? he is the tsar of nature, he is man!

"Pray observe, animals enjoy intercourse only when there is to be progeny, but the vile tsar of nature does it only for pleasure's sake, and at any time; and, moreover, he idealizes this monkey-like business, and calls it the pearl of creation, love! And in the name of this love, that is to say, this vileness, he destroys — what? one-half of the human race! In the name of his grati-

fications he makes of all women, who ought to be his coadjutors in the progress of humanity toward truth and happiness, enemies instead! Look around and tell me who everywhere acts as a hindrance to the progress of humanity — women. And what makes them so? Nothing but this!

“Yes, yes,” he repeated several times, and he began to shift his position, to get out his cigarettes and to smoke, evidently desiring to calm himself a little.

## CHAPTER XIV

“THUS I lived like a pig,” he continued, in his former tone. “The worst of it was that, while I was living this vile life, I imagined that because I did not commit adultery with other women, therefore I was leading a perfectly virtuous family life, that I was a moral man, that I was in no manner to blame, but that if we had our quarrels she was to blame — her character!

“She was not to blame, of course. She was like all other women, like the majority. She had been educated in the way demanded by the position of women in our circle, and therefore as all women, without exception, belonging to the leisurely classes are educated and as they have to be educated.

“They talk nowadays about some new-fangled method of female education. All idle words: the training of women is exactly what it must be in view of the existent, sincere, and genuine notion of women universally held.

“And the education of women will always correspond to the notion of her held by men. Now we all know what that is, how men look on women: *Wein, Weib, und Gesang*, and so it goes in the verses of the poets. Take all poetry, all painting, all sculpture, beginning with erotic verse and naked Venuses and Phrynes, and you will see that woman is an instrument of pleasure; such she is at Truba and at Grachevka and at the finest ball. And mark the devil’s subtlety:

pleasure, satisfaction .... then let it be understood that it is merely pleasure, that woman is a sweet morsel. In the early days, knights boasted that they made divinities of women — apotheosized them, and at the same time they looked on them as the instruments of their pleasure. But nowadays men declare that they respect women, some relinquish their places to them, or pick up their handkerchiefs, others admit their rights to occupy all responsibilities, to take part in government and the like. They do all this, but their view of them is always the same, she is still the instrument of enjoyment, her body is the means of enjoyment. And she knows all that. It is just the same as slavery.

“Slavery is nothing else than the enjoyment by the few of the compulsory labor of the many. And in order that slavery may come to an end, people must cease desiring to take advantage of the compulsory labor of others, must consider it sinful or shameful. But while they take away, while they abolish, the external form of slavery, while they so arrange it that it is no longer possible to buy and sell slaves in the market, and they believe and persuade themselves that slavery is abolished, they do not see and they do not wish to see that slavery still exists, for the reason that people, just the same as ever, like to profit by the labors of others, and consider it fair and honorable to do so. And as long as they consider this to be fair, there will always be men who will be stronger and keener than others, and will be able to do so.

“So it is with the emancipation of women. The slavery of woman consists in precisely this, that men desire to take advantage of her as an instrument of enjoyment, and consider it right to do so.

“Well, and now they emancipate woman, they give her all rights the same as to men, but they still continue to look on her as an instrument of enjoyment, and so they educate her with this end in view, both in childhood and by public opinion. But all the time she is just the same kind of a dissolute slave as before, and her husband is just the same kind of a dissolute slave-owner

"They emancipate women in the colleges and in the law courts, but they look on her still as an object of enjoyment. Train her as she is trained among us, to regard herself in this light, and she will always remain a lower creature. Either she will, with the assistance of villainous doctors, prevent the birth of her offspring, — in other words, she will be a kind of prostitute, degrading herself, not to the level of a beast, but to the level of a thing; or she will be what she is, in the majority of cases, heart-sick, hysterical, unhappy, without the possibility of spiritual development.

"Gymnasias and universities cannot change this. It can be changed only by a change in the way men regard women, and the way women regard themselves. It can be changed only by woman coming to regard virginity as the highest condition, and not as it is now regarded, as a reproach and disgrace. Until this comes about, the ideal of every girl, whatever her education, will still remain that of attracting to herself as many men as possible, as many males as she can, in order that she may have a possibility of choice.

"The fact that one girl understands mathematics, and another can play on the harp, does not change this in the least. A woman is fortunate and attains all that she can desire when she obtains a husband, and therefore the chief task of woman is to learn how to bewitch him. So it has been, and so it will be. Just as this was characteristic of the maiden's life in our circle, so it continues to be even after she is married. In the maiden's life this was necessary for a choice; in the married woman's life it is needed for her ascendancy over her husband.

"The only thing which destroys this — curtails it for the time being — is the birth of children, and this is when she is not a monster; in other words, when she nurses her children. But here again the doctors interfere. In the case of my wife, although she wanted to suckle her first baby, and though she suckled the next five, the state of her health seemed precarious, and these doctors, who cynically undressed her and felt of



her all over,—for which service I was obliged to be grateful to them and to pay money,—these gentle doctors found that she ought not to nurse her child; and so she, this first time, was deprived of the sole means of saving herself from coquetry. She hired a wet-nurse; in other words, we took advantage of the poverty, needs, ignorance of another woman, decoyed her away from her own child to ours, and, in payment for this, gave her a head-dress with laces. But that is not the point. The point is that during this period of emancipation from bearing and nursing babies, the female coquetry, which had hitherto lain dormant, manifested itself in her with greater strength, while correspondingly in me there appeared with especial violence the pangs of jealousy, which unceasingly tore me during all my married life, as they cannot fail to tear all husbands who live with their wives as I lived with mine—that is to say, unnaturally.

## CHAPTER XV

“DURING the whole course of my married life I never ceased to experience the pangs of jealousy, but there were periods when I suffered from them with especial acuteness; and one of these periods was after the birth of my first child, when the doctors forbade her to suckle it. I was especially jealous at this time; in the first place, because my wife suffered from that uneasiness characteristic of mothers, which is calculated to make an unreasonable interruption of the regular course of life; secondly, because when I saw how easily she renounced the moral responsibilities of a mother I naturally, even though unconsciously, concluded that it would be equally easy for her to renounce the duties of a wife; the more so because she was perfectly healthy, and, notwithstanding the prohibition of the dear doctors, she nursed the other children, and nursed them excellently.”

“But you don’t seem to like doctors?” said I, for I

had noticed a particularly bitter tone in his voice every time he mentioned them.

"This is not a matter of love or of hate. They ruined my life, as they have ruined, and will still continue to ruin, the lives of thousands, hundreds of thousands, of people; and I cannot help connecting cause and effect. I understand that they, like lawyers and others, must earn money to live on, and I would willingly give them a half of my income; and, if it were only realized what they were doing, every one else would also, I am convinced, give a half of his property on condition that they would not meddle with our family lives, and would never come near us. I have never collected any statistics, still I know of a dozen cases — a multitude of them — in which they have killed the unborn child, declaring that the mother would not live if the child were born; and yet afterward the mother was admirably fortunate in childbearing; and again they have killed the mother under the pretext of some operation or other. You see, no one reckons up these murders, just as no one ever reckoned the murders of the Inquisition, because it has been supposed that this was done for the benefit of humanity. It is impossible to count the crimes committed by them. But all these crimes are nothing compared to the moral corruption of materialism which they introduced into the world, especially through women.

"I say nothing about the fact that, if we should follow their prescription, then, thanks to the infection everywhere, in everything, people would have to separate instead of drawing closer together; they would have, according to the teachings of the doctors, to sit apart, and never let the atomizer, with carbolic acid, out of their mouths. .... Lately, however, they have discovered that even this is of no special use.

"But this is not to the point. The principal poison lies in the demoralization of the people, women especially.

"To-day, it is no longer enough to say, 'You are living a bad life; live better.' You can't say that to yourself or to another man. But if you are living a bad life, then the cause for it lies in the abnormal state of the ner-

vous functions, and the like. And you have to consult the doctors, and they prescribe for thirty-five kopeks' worth of medicine at the apothecaries, and you take it.

"You will grow even worse, then have to take new drugs and consult other doctors. An excellent dodge!

"But that is not to the point. I only say that she suckled the children admirably, and that the only thing that saved me from the pangs of jealousy was her bearing and nursing her children.

"If it had not been for that, the inevitable end would have come about earlier.

"The children saved me and her. During eight years she gave birth to five children, and all except the first she nursed herself."

"Where are your children now?" I asked.

"My children?" he repeated, with a startled look.

"Forgive me! perhaps this question caused you painful memories."

"No, it's of no consequence. My sister-in-law and her brother took charge of my children. They would not give them to me. You see I am a kind of insane man. I am going away from them now. I have seen them, but they won't give them to me. For if they did, I should educate them so that they should not be like their parents. But it is necessary that they should be the same. Well, what is to be done? I can understand why they should not give them to me, or trust me. And besides, I don't know as I should have the strength to bring them up. I think not. I am a ruin, a cripple! One thing I have....I know. Yes, it is manifest that I know what it will be a long time before the rest of the world know.

"Yes, my children are alive, and are growing up to be just such savages as all the rest around them are. I have seen them—three times I have seen them. I can't do anything for them—not a thing. I am going now to my own place in the south; I have a little house and a little garden there.

"Yes, it will not be soon that people will know what I know. It will soon be easy to find out how much iron

and what other metals there are in the sun and the stars, but what shall cure our swinishness, that is hard, awfully hard!

"You have listened to me, and even for that I am grateful.

## CHAPTER XVI

"You just mentioned the children. There, again, what terrible lying goes on concerning children. Children are a divine benediction. Children are a delight. Now this is all a lie. All this used to be so, but now there is nothing of the sort, nothing at all. Children are a torment, and that is all. The majority of mothers feel so, and some of them do not hesitate to say so, up and down. Ask the greater number of the mothers of our circle, — people of means, — and they will tell you that from terror lest their children should sicken and die they do not wish to have children; if they are born, they do not wish to suckle them, lest they should grow too much attached to them and cause them sorrow. The delight which the child affords them by its beauty, its tiny little arms, its little feet, its whole body, — the satisfaction afforded is less than the agony of apprehension which they experience, I do not say from illness or the loss of the child, but from the mere apprehension of the possibility of illnesses and death. Having weighed the advantages and disadvantages, it seems to be disadvantageous, and therefore that it is not desirable, to have children. They say this openly, boldly, imagining that these sentiments grow out of their love to their children, good, praiseworthy feelings in which they take pride. They do not notice this: that by this reasoning they directly renounce love and assert their egoism. For them there is less pleasure from the charm of a child than suffering from apprehension for it, and therefore they don't desire a child which they would come to love. They do not sacrifice themselves for the beloved creature, but they sacrifice for themselves the beloved creature that is to be.

"It is clear that this is not love, but egoism. But it is not for me to criticize these mothers of well-to-do families for their egoism, when you think of all they endure from the health of their children in our modern fashionable life, thanks again to these same doctors. How well I remember even now our life and the conditions of our life during the first period of our marriage, when we had three or four young children, and she was absorbed with them! It fills me even now with horror.

"It was no kind of a life. It was a perpetual peril, rescue from it followed by new peril; then new and desperate endeavors, and then a new rescue—all the time as if we were on board a sinking ship. It sometimes seemed to me that this was done on purpose; that she was pretending to be troubled about her children so as to get the upper hand of me, so alluringly, so simply all questions were decided for her advantage. It seemed to me sometimes that all that she said and did in these circumstances was done on purpose. But no, she herself suffered terribly and kept tormenting herself about the children, and about the care of their health and about their illnesses. It was a torture for her and for me also. And it was impossible for her not to torment herself.

"You see her attachment to her children,—the animal instinct to nurse them, to fondle them, to protect them was in her as it is in the majority of women; but she had not what animals have—a freedom from imagination and reason. The hen has no fear of what may befall her chick, she knows nothing about the diseases which may come upon it, knows nothing of all those remedies which men imagine they can employ to keep away sickness and death. And for the hen the young ones are no torment. She does for her chicks what is natural and pleasant for her to do, and her young are a delight to her. When the chicken shows signs of sickness her duties are distinctly determined: she warms and nourishes it. And in doing this she knows that she is doing her duty. If the chicken dies, she does not ask herself why it died, where it has gone to, she cackles for a while, then stops and goes on living as before.

"But for our unhappy women and for my wife there was nothing of the kind. Then, besides the question of diseases and how to cure them, of how to educate them, how to develop them, she had heard from all sides and had read endlessly varied and contradictory rules: you must feed it this way, no not this way, but so; how to dress it, what to give it to drink, when to bathe it, when to put it to sleep, when to take it out to walk, ventilation, — in regard to all this, we — and she especially — learned new rules every week. Just as if children began to be born only yesterday! Why! some child was not fed quite properly, or was n't bathed at the right time, and it fell ill, and it showed that we were to blame — that we had not done what we should have done. Even when children are well, they are a torment. But when they fall ill, why then, of course, it is a perfect hell. It is presupposed that sickness may be cured and that there is such a science and there are such men — doctors, and that they know. Not that all know, but that the best of them do. And here is a sick child and it is requisite to get hold of this man, the very best of his profession, who can cure, and the child is saved; and if you don't get hold of this doctor, or if you don't live where this doctor lives, then the child is lost. And this belief was not exclusively confined to my wife, but it is the belief of all the women of her sphere, and on all sides she hears such talk as this:—

"Two of Yekaterina Semyonovna's children died because they did not call Ivan Zakharuitch in time, but Ivan Zakharuitch saved the life of Marya Ivanovna's oldest daughter; and here the Petrovitch children were sent in time to different hotels by this doctor's advice, and so their lives were saved; but those that had not been isolated, died. And such and such a woman had a feeble child, and by the doctor's advice they took it South, and it lived. ....'

"How can one fail to torment oneself and grow excited all one's life long, when the life of her children, to whom she is devotedly attached, depends on her knowing in time what Ivan Zakharuitch will say about it?

But no one knows what Ivan Zakharuitch will say — least of all himself, because he knows very well that he knows nothing at all and cannot give any help, and he only tergiversates at haphazard merely in order that people may not cease to believe in his knowledge.

“You see, if she had been simply an animal, she would not have tormented herself so; while if she had been a normal human being, then she would have had faith in God, she would have thought and spoken as true believers say:—

“‘God gave and God has taken and one can’t escape from God.’

“So our whole life with our children was no joy but a torment for her, and, therefore, for me also. How could we help tormenting ourselves? And she constantly did torment herself. It used to be that just as we were calming down from any scene of jealousy or a simple quarrel, and were planning to begin a new life, to read something and to do something, and had only got fairly started, word would suddenly be brought that Vasya was vomiting, that Masha had the dysentery, or that Andryusha had a rash — and the end of it was that we had no kind of a life. Where should we send, what doctor should we get, in which room should we isolate the patient? And then began klysters, the taking of temperatures, the medicines, and the doctors. And this would scarcely be done with before something else would begin. There was no regular family life. But, as I have told you, there was a constant apprehension from real or fancied dangers. And that is the way it is in most families. In my family it was especially pronounced. My wife was affectionate and superstitious.

“Thus it was that the presence of children not only did not improve our life, but poisoned it. Moreover, the children gave us a new pretext for quarreling. From the time we began to have children, and the more in proportion as they grew up, the more frequently our children became the very means and object of our quarrels, not only the subject, but the very instrument

of dissension ; we, as it were, fought each other with our own children as weapons. Each of us had his own favorite child as a weapon of attack. I made more use of Vasya the eldest, and she of Liza. Later, when the children had begun to grow up, and their characters formed, it came about that they took sides with us according as we were able to attract them. They suffered terribly from this state of affairs, poor little things, but we in our incessant warfare had no time to think of them. The little girl was my special ally ; the oldest boy, who resembled his mother and was her favorite, often seemed hateful to me.

## CHAPTER XVII

“WELL, thus we lived. Our relations grew more and more hostile, and at last it went so far that difference of views no longer produced enmity, but that enmity produced difference of views. Whatever she said I was ready in advance to disagree with her, and so it was with her.

“In the fourth year it was fairly admitted by both of us, though tacitly, that we could not understand each other—that we could not agree. We ceased to make any attempt to talk anything over to the end. In regard to the simplest things, especially the children, we each kept our own opinion unchangeably. As I now remember, the opinions which I advocated were not so precious in my sight that I could not give them up ; but she had opposing notions, and to yield to them meant to yield to her. And this I could not do. Nor could she yield to me. She evidently counted herself always perfectly right toward me, and as for me, I was always a saint in my own eyes compared to her. When we were together we were almost reduced to silence, or to such conversations as I am convinced the beasts may carry on together : — ‘What time is it ?’ — ‘Is it bedtime ?’ — ‘What will you have for dinner to-day ?’ — ‘Where will you



drive?'—'What is the news?'—'We must send for the doctor; Masha has a sore throat.'

"It required only to step a hair's width beyond this unendurably narrowing circle of conventional sentences in order to inspire a dissension,—skirmishes and expressions of hatred regarding the coffee, the table-cloth, the drive, the course of the game at whist,—in fact, over trifles which could not have had the slightest importance for either of us. In me, at least, hatred of her boiled terribly. I often looked at her when she was drinking tea, waving her foot, or conveying her spoon to her mouth, sipping from it and swallowing the liquid, and I hated her for this very trifle as if it were the worst of crimes. I did not notice that these periods broke out in me with perfect regularity and uniformity, corresponding to the periods of what we called 'love.' A period of 'love'—then a period of hatred; an energetic period of passion, then a long period of hatred; a feebler manifestation of passion, then a briefer outbreak of hatred.

"We did not then comprehend that this love and hatred were one and the same animal passion, only with opposite poles. It would have been horrible to live in this way if we had realized our situation; but we did not realize it and did not see it. In this lie the salvation as well as the punishment of a man is that when he is living irregularly he may blind himself so as not to see the wretchedness of his situation.

"Thus it was with us. She endeavored to forget herself in strenuous and ever absorbing occupations,—her housekeeping, the arrangement of the furniture, dressing herself and the family, and the education and health of the children. I had my own affairs to attend to,—drinking, hunting, playing cards, going to my office. We were both busy all the time. We both felt that the busier we were the more annoyed we might be with each other.

"'It is very well for you to make up such grimaces,' I would think, mentally addressing her. 'How you tormented me all night with your scenes. But I have a meeting to attend.'

"‘It is all very well for you,’ she would not only think, but even say aloud, ‘but the baby kept me awake all night long.’

"These new theories of hypnotism, mental diseases, hysteria, are all an absurdity — not a simple absurdity, but a vile and pernicious one. In regard to my wife, Charcot would have infallibly said that she was a victim of hysteria, and he would have said of me that I was abnormal, and probably he would have tried to cure us. But there was no disease to cure.

"Thus we lived in a continual mist, not cognizant of the situation in which we found ourselves. And if the catastrophe which overtook us had not occurred, I should have continued to live on till old age in the same way, and on my death-bed I should have even thought that I had lived a good life, — not remarkably good, but not at all a bad life, — like that of all other men. I should never have understood that abyss of unhappiness and that abominable falsehood in which I was floundering.

"We were like two convicts, fastened to one chain and hating each other, each poisoning the life of the other and striving not to recognize the fact. I did not then realize that ninety-nine per cent of married people live in the same hell as mine, and that it must infallibly be so. I did not then realize that it was true of others or true of myself.

"It is amazing what coincidences may be found in a regular and even in an irregular life. Thus when parents are beginning to find that they are making each other's lives unendurable, it becomes imperative that they go to the city for the better education of their children. And so it was we found it necessary to move to the city."

He stopped speaking, and twice gave vent to those strange sounds which this time were quite like repressed sobs. We were approaching a station.

"What time is it?" he asked.

I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock.

"Are n't you tired?" he asked.

"No; but are you not tired?"

"I am suffocating. Permit me, I will go out and get a drink of water."

And he got up and went staggering through the carriage.

I sat alone, cogitating over what he had told me, and I fell into such a brown study that I did not notice him when he returned through the other door.

## CHAPTER XVIII

"YES, I all the time wander from my story," he began; "I have pondered over it a good deal. I look on many things in a different way from what most do, and I want to talk it all out.

"Well, we began to live in the city. There a man may live a century and never dream that he has long ago died and rotted. One has no time to study himself — his time is wholly occupied: business, social relations, his health, art, the health of his children, and their education. Now he must receive calls from such and such people and must return them; now he must see this woman and hear some famous man or woman talk. You see, at any given moment there will be in the city surely one celebrity, and generally several, whom it is impossible for you to miss. Now you have to consult a doctor for yourself or for this one or that, then you have to see one of the tutors or the governess, and life is frittered away. Well, so it was we lived and suffered less from our life together. Moreover, we had at first the charming occupation of getting settled in a new city, in new quarters, and then again in traveling back and forth between the city and the country.

"Thus we lived one winter, and during the second winter the circumstance which I am going to relate took place, and though it seemed a trifling thing and attracted no attention, still it brought about all that succeeded.

"She became delicate in health, and the doctors for

bade her to have any more children, and they taught her how to prevent it. This was repulsive to me. I had no patience with such an idea, but she with frivolous obstinacy insisted on having her own way, and I had to yield. The last justification of the swinish life—children—was taken away, and our life became viler than ever.

"To the muzhik, to the laboring man, children are a necessity; although it is hard for him to feed them, still he must have them and there the marital relations are justified. But to us, who already have children, more children are not a desideratum; they cause extra work, expense, further division of property--they are a burden.

"And therefore there is no justification for us of the swinish life. Either we artificially prevent the birth of children or we regard children as a misfortune,—as the consequence of carelessness, which is worse.

"There is no justification. But we have fallen morally so low that we do not see the need of any justification. The majority of men now belonging to the cultivated classes give themselves up to this form of debauchery without the slightest twinge of conscience.

"No one feels any conscientious scruples, because conscience is a non-existent quality except—if we may so say—the conscience of public opinion and of the criminal law. And in this respect neither the one nor the other is violated; no one has to bear the brunt of public scorn, for all do the same thing: both Marya Pavlovna and Ivan Zakharuitch. Why breed beggars or deprive oneself of the possibility of social life?.... or is there any reason to stand in awe of the criminal law or to fear it. Ugly peasant girls and soldiers' wives may throw their babies into ponds and wells, and they of course must go to prison, but all that sort of thing is done by us opportunely and neatly!

"Thus we lived two years. The means employed by the rascally doctors evidently began to take effect: physically she improved and she grew more beautiful, like the last beauty of the summer. She was conscious

of this, and began to take care of herself. Her beauty became fascinating and disturbing to men. As she was in the prime of a woman of thirty and was no longer bearing children, she grew plump — stirring the passions. Even the sight of her made one uneasy. When she came among men she attracted all eyes. She was like a well-fed and bridled horse which had not been driven for some time and from which the bridle was taken off. There was no longer any restraint, as with ninety-nine per cent of our women. Even I felt this, and it was terrible to me."

## CHAPTER XIX

HE suddenly got up and sat down close by the window.

"Excuse me," he exclaimed, and looking out intently sat there for as much as three minutes. Then he sighed deeply and again sat down opposite me. His face had undergone a complete change, there came a piteous look into his eyes, and a strange sort of smile curved his lips.

"I had grown a little tired, but I will go on with my story. There is plenty of time left; it has not begun to grow light yet. Yes," he began again, after he had lighted a cigarette. "She grew plumper after she ceased to bear children, and her malady — the constant worryment over the children — began to disappear; it did not really disappear, but she, as it were, awoke from a drunken stupor; she began to remember, and she saw that there was a whole world, a divine world, with its joys about which she had entirely forgotten, but in which she did not know how to live — a divine world which she did not understand at all.

"How keep it from being wasted. Time is fleeting — it will not return."

"Thus I imagined she thought or rather felt, and indeed it would have been impossible for it to be other

wise; she had been educated to believe that in this world there is only one thing worthy of any one's attention—love. She had become married, she had got some notion of what this love was, but it was very far from being what had been promised, from what she expected; she had undergone the loss of many illusions; she had borne many sufferings, and then that unexpected torment—so many children! This agony had worn her out. And now, thanks to the obliging doctors, she had found out that it was possible to avoid having children. She was glad of that, made the experiment, and began to live for the one thing which she knew about—for the sake of love. But the enjoyment of love with a husband who was consumed with the fiery passions of wrath and jealousy was not the kind she wanted. She began to picture to herself another, a more genuine, a newer kind of connection—at least that is what I imagine was the case. And so she began to look around, as if she were expecting something.

"I noticed it, and was correspondingly troubled. It kept all the time happening that she, talking as her habit was with me through the medium of others, that is to say, talking with strangers, but making her remarks for my ears, expressed herself boldly, never at all dreaming that she, an hour before, had said diametrically the opposite, and expressed herself half seriously to the effect that that maternal solicitude was a delusion, that there was no sense in sacrificing her life for her children, that she was still young and could still enjoy life. She really occupied herself less with her children, certainly with less of desperate solicitude; but she gave more and more attention to herself, occupied herself with her external appearance, although she tried to keep it secret; also with her pleasures and with her accomplishments. She once more enthusiastically took up her piano practice which hitherto she had entirely neglected. That was the beginning of the end."

He once more turned to the window his weary-looking eyes, but straightway, evidently making an effort to control himself, he proceeded:—

"Yes, that man appeared."

He hesitated, and twice produced through his nose his peculiar sounds. I saw that it was trying for him to mention that man, to recall him, even to allude to him. But he made an effort, and as it were breaking through the barrier which hindered him, he resolutely went on:—

"A vile fellow he was in my eyes, in my estimation. And not because he played an important part in my life, but because he was really vile. However, the fact that he was bad serves merely as a proof of how irresponsible she was. If it had not been he, it would have surely been some one else."

He again ceased speaking.

"Yes, he was a musician, a fiddler — not a professional musician, but half professional, half society man. His father was a landed proprietor, a neighbor of my father's. His father went to ruin, and his children — three of them were boys — all managed to make their way; only this one, the youngest, was intrusted to his godmother and sent to Paris. There he was sent to the Conservatoire, because he had a talent for music, and he was graduated as a fiddler and played in concerts. He was the man." ....

It was evident that he wished to say something harsh about him, but he restrained himself, and said, speaking rapidly:—

"Well, I don't know how he had lived up to that time, but that year he appeared in Russia and came to my house. .... He had almond-shaped, humid eyes, handsome, smiling lips, little waxed mustaches, the latest and most fashionable method of dressing his hair, an insipidly handsome face, such as women call 'not bad,' a slender build, though not ill-shaped, and with a largely developed behind such as they say characterize Hottentot women. This it is said is musical! Slipping into familiarity, as far as was permitted him, but sensitive and always ready to stop short at the slightest resistance, with a regard to external appearances, and with that peculiar touch of Parisian elegance, caused by buttoned boots and bright-colored neckties and everything

else which foreigners acquire in Paris, and which by their character of novelty always attract women. In his manners there was a factitious external gayety. A way, as you may know, of speaking about everything by means of hints and fragmentary allusions, as if the person with whom he was speaking knew all about it, and could fill out the missing links.

"Well, then, this man with his music was the cause of all the trouble. You see at the trial the whole affair was represented as having been caused by my jealousy. This was not so at all, that is to say, it was not exactly so; it was, and it was not. At the trial it was decided that I had been deceived and that I had committed the murder in defending my outraged honor, — so they called it in their language, — and on this ground I was acquitted. At the trial I did my best to explain my idea of it, but they understood that I had wished to rehabilitate my wife's honor.

"Her relations with that musician, whatever they were, did not have in my eyes that significance, nor in hers either. It simply had the significance I have already mentioned, that of my swinishness. All came from the fact that between us existed that terrible gulf, of which I have told you, that terrible tension of mutual hatred, whereby the first impulse was sufficient to precipitate the crisis. The quarrels between us, as time went on, became something awful and were remarkably striking, being mingled with intense animal passion.

"If he had not appeared, surely some one else would. If there had not been one pretext for jealousy, there would have been another. I insist upon it that all husbands living as I lived must either live wanton lives, or separate, or kill themselves or their wives as I did. If this does not occur in any given case, it is a rare exception. Why, before the end came, as I made it come, I was several times on the brink of suicide, and even she poisoned herself.



## CHAPTER XX

"YES, this happened not long before the crisis.

"We had been living in a sort of armistice, and there was no reason for it to be broken. Suddenly a conversation began, in which I remarked that a certain dog had received a medal at an exhibition. She said:—

"‘Not a medal, but honorable mention.’

"A dispute began. We began to reproach each other, skipping from subject to subject.

"‘Well, I knew that long ago; it was always so.’

"‘You said so and so.’

"‘No, I said thus and so.’

"‘Do you mean to say I lie?’

"There is a feeling that you are on the edge of a frightful quarrel, and that you will be tempted to kill yourself or her. You know that it will begin in an instant and you dread it like fire and you want to control yourself, but anger seizes on your whole being. She is in the same or in an even worse condition, and she deliberately puts a wrong construction on every word you say, giving it a false signification, and every word she speaks is steeped in poison; wherever she knows I am most sensitive, there she strikes. The farther it goes, the more portentous it grows. I cry:—

"‘Silence,’ or the like.

"She rushes from the room and takes refuge in the nursery. I try to detain her so that I may say out my say and prove my position, and I seize her by the arm. She pretends that I hurt her and screams:—

"‘Children, your father is striking me.’

"I cry:—

"‘Don’t you lie!’

"‘And this is not the first time either,’ she cries, or something to that effect.

"The children rush to her. She tries to calm them I say,—

"‘Don’t pretend.’

"She says:—

“‘For you everything is pretense. You strike a woman and then say that she is pretending. Now I understand you. This is the very thing you want.’

“I shout :—

“‘Oh, if you were only dead!’<sup>1</sup>

“I remember how horror-struck I was at those terrible words. I would never have believed myself capable of uttering such coarse, terrible words, and I am amazed that they leap forth from my mouth. I shout out those terrible words and rush into my library, sit down and smoke. I hear her go into the vestibule, preparing to go out. I ask :—

“‘Where are you going?’

“She makes no reply.

“‘Well, the devil go with her!’ I say to myself, as I return to the library and again sit down and smoke. A thousand different plans of how to avenge myself on her and how to get rid of her, how to set everything to rights again and how to act as if nothing had taken place, go rushing through my brain.

“And as I sit and think, I smoke, smoke, smoke! I conceive the plan of running away from her, of hiding myself, of going to America. I actually go as far as to dream of getting rid of her, and I think how delightful it would be as soon as this is accomplished to make new ties with some beautiful woman, entirely new. I dream of getting rid of her by her dying or by securing a divorce, and I cogitate how this may be brought about. I see that my mind is wandering, that I am not thinking consecutively; but in order that I may not see that I am thinking the wrong kind of thoughts and am entirely at sea, I smoke.

“But life at home goes on. The governess comes and asks :—

“‘Where is madame? when will she be back?’

“The lackey asks :—

“‘Shall I serve tea?’

“I go into the dining-room. The children, especially the oldest one, Liza, who is already old enough to under-

<sup>1</sup> *Isdokhila*, dead; a word applied to beasts.

stand, look at me questioningly, disapprovingly. We silently drink our tea. Of her there is no sign. The whole evening passes; she does not come, and two thoughts mingle in my soul: wrath against her because she is tormenting me and all the children by her absence, — and yet, she will return in the end, — and fear that she will not come back, but will lay violent hands on herself.

"I should go out in search of her. But where to find her? At her sister's? But it would be stupid to go there with such an inquiry. Well, then, God go with her! if she wants to torment us, let her torment herself also. That is the very thing she would like. And next time she will be worse.

"But supposing she is not at her sister's, but has done something else — has even already laid hands on herself?

"Eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock. .... I will not go into the sleeping-room — it would be stupid to lie down there and wait alone, but I will lie down where I am. I try to occupy myself with some work, to write letters, to read; but I can't do anything. I sit alone in my library, I torment myself with apprehensions, I am full of anger, I listen. Three o'clock, four — no sign of her. I fall asleep just before morning. When I wake up, there is no sign of her.

"Everything in the house goes on as usual; but all are in a state of dubiety, and look questioningly and reproachfully at me, supposing that it is all my fault. And within me is still the same struggle — anger because she torments me, and anxiety about her.

"About eleven o'clock in the morning her sister comes as her envoy; and she begins in the usual way: —

"'She is in a terrible state of mind. Now what does it all mean? Something must have happened.'

"I speak about the incompatibility of her temper, and I asseverate that I have done nothing.

"'But you see that things cannot be allowed to go on in this way,' says she.

"'It is all her affair, not mine,' I say. 'I shall not

take the first step. If it be a separation, then let it be a separation.'

"My sister-in-law goes away without getting any satisfaction. I have spoken boldly that I would not take the first step; but as soon as she has gone, and I see the poor, frightened children, I am already prepared to take the first step. I should even be glad to do so, but I don't know how. Again I walk up and down and smoke, and after breakfast fortify myself with vodka and wine, and attain what I was unconsciously desirous of: I do not see the stupidity, the cowardice of my position.

"About three she returns. She meets me, but has nothing to say. I imagine that she has come to seek for a reconciliation, and I begin to tell her how I had been led on by her reproaches. She, with the same harsh, terribly harassed face, replies that she has not come to indulge in explanations, but to take the children away — that we cannot possibly live together.

"I begin to explain that I was not the one to blame, that it was she who had driven me out of my senses.

"She looks at me sternly, triumphantly, and then says:—

"'Say no more, you will be sorry enough.'

"I reply that I cannot endure any comedy.

"Then she screams out something which I cannot comprehend and flees to her room. And she turns the key behind her; she has locked herself in. I knock; no answer, and full of wrath, I wait.

"At the end of half an hour Liza comes running in with tears in her eyes.

"'What has happened?'

"'I cannot hear mamma.'

"We go to her room. I press against the door with all my might. The bolt happens to be not wholly pushed in, and both halves of the door yield. I hasten to the bed. She is lying on it in an uncomfortable position in her petticoats and boots. On the table is an empty opium bottle. We bring her to consciousness. Tears and ultimate reconciliation. But it is no reconcili

ation; in the soul of each of us is the same old anger against each other, and an additional sense of exasperation for the pain which this quarrel has caused and which each blames the other for. But this trouble must be somehow ended, and life goes on in its old grooves. But in the same way such quarrels and even worse ones take place regularly all the time — now with a week's interval, now a month's interval, now every day, and it is always the same thing.

"One time I even applied for a foreign passport — the quarrel had lasted two days. But there ensued a semi-explanation, a semi-reconciliation, and I stayed.

## CHAPTER XXI

"SUCH then were our relations when that man appeared. He came to Moscow — his name was Trukhachevsky — and he came to my house. It was in the morning. I received him. In former times we had been on familiar terms.<sup>1</sup> He endeavored, sometimes using the more formal, sometimes the more familiar, form of address, to keep on 'his old footing of thee and thou, but I quickly settled the question by using the formal 'you' and he immediately took the hint. Even at the first glance he impressed me unfavorably. But strangely enough some peculiar fatal power impelled me not to keep him at a distance, to send him away, but rather to draw him nearer to me. Why, what could have been simpler than to have talked coolly with him a few minutes, and to have said 'good morning' without introducing him to my wife?

"But no, I talked with him deliberately about his playing, and remarked that we had been told that he had given up playing the fiddle. He replied that on the contrary he was playing now more than ever before. He recalled the fact that I, too, had once played. I said that I had given up playing, but that my wife played very well. Wonderful thing! My relations to him that

<sup>1</sup> *Mui buili na tui* — that is, we used the second person singular.

very first day, that very first hour of my meeting with him, were such as they could have been only after all that occurred subsequently. There was something strained in my relations with him; I noticed every word, every expression, said by him or myself, and attributed importance to them.

"I presented him to my wife. Immediately a conversation on music began between them, and he offered his services to practise with her. My wife, as was always the case with her at that later period of her life, was very elegant and fascinating, captivatingly beautiful. He evidently pleased her at first sight. Moreover, she was delighted with the prospect of having the gratification of playing with violin and piano, which she liked so much that she had once hired a fiddler from the theater, and her face expressed this pleasure. But as soon as she saw me, she instantly understood how I felt about it, and her expression changed, and our game of mutual deceit began. I smiled pleasantly, pretending it was very agreeable to me. He, looking at my wife as all immoral men look at pretty women, pretended that he was interested in nothing else but the topic of conversation, especially that part which did not interest him at all. She tried to seem indifferent, but my falsely smiling expression of jealousy, so well known to her, and his lecherous look evidently disturbed her. I saw that from his very first glance her eyes shone with peculiar brilliancy, and apparently as a consequence of my jealousy there passed between him and her something like an electrical shock, calling forth something like a uniformity in the expression of their eyes and their smiles. She blushed, he reddened. She smiled, he smiled. They talked about music, about Paris, about all sorts of trifles. He rose to take his leave, and stood smiling with his hat resting against his quivering thigh, and looked now at her, now at me, apparently waiting to see what we would do.

"I remember that moment especially because at that moment I might have refrained from inviting him to call again, and if I had, the trouble would not have happened. But I looked at him and her.

“‘Do not think for an instant that I am jealous of you,’ said I, mentally, to her, ‘or that I am afraid of you,’ said I, mentally, to him, and I invited him to come some evening and bring his fiddle and play with my wife. She looked at me in surprise, blushed, and as if startled, began to plead off, declaring that she did not play well enough. This refusal of hers irritated me still more, and I insisted on it with all the more vehemence. I remember the strange feeling I had as I looked at the back of his head and his white neck, strongly contrasting with his black hair which was combed back on both sides, as he left us with a springy gait like that of a bird. I cannot help acknowledging to myself that this man’s presence was a torture to me.

“‘It depends on me,’ I said to myself, ‘to act in such a way as never to see him again. But so to act would be equivalent to a confession that I fear him. No, I do not fear him; it would be too humiliating,’ I said to myself. And there in the anteroom, knowing that my wife was listening to me, I insisted that he should come back that very evening and bring his fiddle with him. He promised that he would and took his departure.

“In the evening he came with his fiddle, and they played together. But for a long time the music did not go very well; we had not the pieces that he wanted, and those he had my wife could not play without preparation. I was very fond of music and sympathized with their playing, arranging the music-stand for him and turning over the leaves. They managed to play something—a few songs without words and a sonata by Mozart. He played excellently, and he had to the highest degree what is called ‘temperament’—moreover, a delicate, noble art, entirely out of keeping with his character.

“He was, of course, far stronger than my wife, and he helped her and at the same time politely praised her playing. He behaved very well. My wife seemed interested only in the music, and was very simple and natural. Though I also pretended to be interested in

the music, still, all the evening, I did not cease to be tortured by jealousy. From the first moment when his eyes fell on my wife I saw that the wild beast existing in them both, out of the reach of all the conditions of their position and the society in which they lived, was asking, 'Is it possible?' and answering its own question with a 'Yes, certainly it is.' I saw that he had never expected to find in my wife, in a society lady of Moscow, such a fascinating creature, and that he was delighted. Therefore there could be no doubt in his mind that she was harmonious with him. The whole question consisted in how the insufferable husband should not interfere with them. If I myself had been pure, I should not have understood this, but I, like the majority of men, had indulged in the same notions of women, until I was married, and therefore I could read his soul like a book.

"I was especially tormented by the fact that I could remark that her feelings and mine were in a state of constant irritation only occasionally interrupted by our habitual sensuality; while this man, both by his external elegance and by his novelty, by the fact that he was a stranger, but chiefly because of his indubitably great musical talent, by the proximity due to their playing together, by the influence produced by music, especially by a fiddle, on a very impressionable nature — all this, I say, made it inevitable that this man should please her, and more than that, that he should get a complete ascendancy over her, without the least hesitation, conquer, overwhelm, fascinate, enchain, and do with her whatever he willed. I could not help seeing that, and I suffered awfully. But in spite of this, or possibly in consequence of it, some force, against my will, compelled me to be especially polite and even affectionate to him. Whether I did this to show my wife, to show him, that I was not afraid of it, or whether I did it to deceive myself, I do not know; only I could not from the very first be natural with him. In order not to yield to my desire to kill him on the spot, I had to be friendly toward him. At dinner I treated him to expensive



wines, I praised him for his playing and talked with him with a peculiarly affectionate smile, and invited him to dinner on the following Sunday, and to play again with my wife. I said I would ask some of my musical friends to hear him. And so it came to an end."

And Pozdnuishef, under the influence of powerful emotion, changed his position and emitted his peculiar sounds.

"It is strange what an effect the presence of that man had on me," he began once more, evidently making an effort to become calm.

"Two or three days after this I came home from an exhibition, and as I entered the vestibule I became conscious of a sudden feeling of oppression, exactly as if a stone had been rolled on my heart, and I could not explain it to myself. It was due to the fact that as I was passing through the vestibule I noticed something which reminded me of him. Only when I reached my library was I able to explain what it was, and I returned to the vestibule to verify it. Yes, I had not been mistaken, it was his cloak. A fashionable cloak, you know. Everything relating to him, although I could not explain the why and wherefore, I remarked with extraordinary attention. I asked if he was there, and the servant said 'yes.' I passed through the recitation-room, not the drawing-room, into the 'hall.' Liza, my daughter, was sitting with her book, and the nurse with the little girl was sitting at the table spinning a cover. The door into the 'hall' was closed, but I could hear the monotonous arpeggios and the sound of her voice and his. I listened, but could not decide what to do. Evidently the notes of the piano were played on purpose to drown out their words, perhaps their kisses. My God, what a storm arose in me! The mere thought of the wild beast which then awoke in me fills me with horror. My heart suddenly contracted, then stopped beating, and then it began to throb like a sledge-hammer.

"The chief feeling, as always in any outburst of anger, was pity for myself. 'Before the children, before the nurse,' I exclaimed inwardly. I must have

been terrible to look at, because even Liza looked at me with frightened eyes.

“‘What is there for me to do?’ I asked myself. ‘Shall I go in? I cannot, for God knows what I should do. But neither can I go away. The nurse is looking at me as if she understood my position. But I cannot go in.’ I said this to myself and hurriedly opened the door.

“He was sitting at the piano and was playing those arpeggios with his large white fingers bent back. She was standing at one corner of the grand bending over an opened score. She was the first to see me or hear me and she looked at me. I know not whether she was startled or pretended not to be startled or really was not startled—at any rate, she did not show any agitation or even move, but merely blushed, but that was afterward.

“‘How glad I am that you have come. We can’t decide what to play next Sunday,’ said she, in a tone which she would never have employed in addressing me when we were alone. That and the fact that she said ‘we,’ connecting herself and him, exasperated me. I silently bowed to him. He pressed my hand, and instantly, with a smile which seemed to me derisive, began to explain that he had brought some music for Sunday, but that they could not agree what to play; whether something difficult and classical, such as a Beethoven violin sonata, or some easy trifles. All this was so natural and simple that it was impossible to find any fault with it, and yet I was convinced that it was all a falsehood, that they had been planning how to deceive me.

“One of the most torturing conditions for jealous men—and all of us are jealous in our fashionable society—are certain social conventions whereby the greatest and most dangerous proximity is permitted to a man and a woman. People would simply make themselves ridiculous if they tried to prevent this proximity at balls, between doctors and their female patients, between artists, and especially musicians. Two people occupy themselves with the noblest of arts—music; in order to accomplish this a certain proximity is required, and this

proximity has nothing reprehensible in it, and only a stupid, jealous husband could find anything undesirable in it. But meantime all know that precisely by means of these very occupations, especially by music, the largest part of the adultery committed in the ranks of our society is committed.

"I especially confused them by the confusion which I myself showed; it was long before I could speak a word. I was like an upturned bottle from which the water will not flow because it is too full. I wanted to heap abuses on him, to drive him away; but I felt that it was my duty to be friendly and affectionate to him again, and so I was. I pretended that I approved of everything, and once more I felt that strange impulse which compelled me to treat him with a friendliness proportioned to the torment which his presence caused me.

"I told him that I had great confidence in his taste and I advised her to do the same. He stayed just as long as it was required to do away with the disagreeable impression made by my sudden appearance with such a scared face, and after a silence he took his departure, pretending that they had now determined what they would play the next day. I was perfectly convinced that in comparison with what was really occupying them, the question as to what they should play was perfectly immaterial.

"I accompanied him with more than ordinary courtesy to the vestibule — how could one fail to treat courteously a man who had come on purpose to disturb my peace of mind and destroy the happiness of a whole family? — and I pressed his soft white hand with especial affection.

## CHAPTER XXII

"THAT whole day I did not speak to her — I could not. Her proximity produced in me such hatred of her that I feared for myself. At dinner she asked me in the presence of the children when I was going away. My duties called me the following week to a meeting in my

district. I told her when. She asked me if I needed anything for my journey. I did not say anything, and I sat in silence at the table, and silently went to my library. Of late she had got out of the habit of coming to my library, especially at that time of day. I was lying down in my library, and was angry enough. Suddenly her well-known steps were heard coming, and the terrible, ugly thought leaped to my brain that she, like Uriah's wife, had already committed the sin and wanted to hide it, and that was why she was coming to me at such an unseasonable hour.

"Can it be that she is really coming to me?' I asked myself as I heard her approaching step.

"If she is coming to me, then it means I am right.'

"And in my soul arose an ineffable hatred of her. Nearer, nearer came her steps.

"Can it be that she is going by into the hall?'

"No, the door creaked and her tall, handsome figure appeared, and her face, her eyes, expressed timidity, and a desire to win my good-will, as I could easily see, and the significance of it I understood perfectly. I almost suffocated, so long I held my breath, and continuing to stare at her, I grasped my cigarette-case and began to smoke.

"Now how can you? Some one comes to sit with you and you go to smoking;' and she sat down near me on the divan, and leaned up against me. I moved away, so as not to be in contact with her.

"I see that you are vexed because I am going to play on Sunday,' said she.

"Not in the least,' said I.

"But can't I see that you are?'

"Well, I congratulate you on your perspicacity. I see nothing except the fact that you behave like a coquette. To you all such kinds of vulgarity are pleasant, but to me they are horrible.'

"There, now, if you are going to abuse me like an *izvoshchik*, then I will go.'

"Go, then; but know that the honor of your family

is not dear to you, neither are you dear to me—the devil take you—but the honor of the family is—’

“‘Now, what do you mean?’

“‘Get out of my sight! for God’s sake, get out.’

“I know not whether she pretended that she did not comprehend, or really did not comprehend; but she only took offense, grew angry, and instead of leaving stood in the middle of the room.

“‘You have become positively unendurable,’ she began. ‘You have such a disposition that not even an angel could get along with you.’ And, as always, trying to wound me as keenly as possible, she reminded me of the way I had treated my sister. It had happened that one time I forgot myself and spoke some very harsh words to my sister; she knew about it and that it tormented me, and so she wounded me in that place.

“After that, nothing that you could do would surprise me,’ said she.

“‘Yes, insult me, humiliate me, disgrace me, and make me out to blame,’ said I, to myself, and suddenly a terrible anger against her seized me, such as I had never before experienced. For the first time I felt the impulse to express this anger with physical force. I leaped up and moved toward her; but at the instant that I sprang to my feet, I became conscious of my anger and asked myself, ‘Is it well to give way to this impulse?’ and immediately the answer came that it was, that this would serve to frighten her; and on the spot, instead of withstanding my wrath, I began to fan it to a greater heat, and to rejoice because it grew more and more intense in me.

“‘Get out of here, or I will kill you,’ I screamed, going closer to her and seizing her by the arm. In saying this I was conscious of raising my voice to a higher pitch, and I must have become terrible, because she became so frightened that she had not the strength to go, but merely stammered:—

“‘Vasya, what is it, what is the matter with you?’

“‘Go,’ I cried, in a still louder tone. ‘No one but you can drive me to madness. I won’t be responsible for what I may do!’

"Having given free course to my madness I intoxicated myself with it, and I felt the impulse to do something extraordinary which should show the high-water mark of this madness of mine. I felt a terrible impulse to strike her, to kill her; but I knew that it was an impossibility, and therefore in order to give free course to my madness, I snatched up a paper-weight from the table, and shouting once more, 'Go!' I flung it down on the floor, near her. I aimed it carefully, so as to strike near her. Then she left the room, but remained standing in the doorway. And then while she was still looking—I did it so that she might see—I began to snatch up from the table various objects—the candlestick, the inkstand—and hurled them on the floor, still continuing to shout,—

"'Go, get out of my sight! I won't be responsible for what I may do.'

"She went, and I immediately ceased.

"In the course of an hour the nurse came and told me that my wife was suffering from hysterics. I went to her; she was sobbing and laughing, and could not speak a word and was trembling all over. She was not pretending, but was really ill. Toward morning she grew calm, and we had a reconciliation under the influence of that passion which we call 'love.'

"In the morning, after our reconciliation I confessed to her that I was jealous of Trukhachevsky. She was not in the least confused, and laughed in the most natural manner. So strange even to her seemed, as she said, the possibility of being drawn to such a man.

"'Is it possible that a respectable woman could feel anything for such a man beyond the pleasure which his music might afford? But if you wish, I am ready not to see him again. Even though all the guests are invited for Sunday, write him that I am ill, and that will be the end of it. Only one thing makes me indignant, and that is that any one could imagine, and especially he himself, that he is dangerous. I am too proud to permit myself to think of such a thing.'

"And evidently she was not prevaricating; she believed

in what she was saying; she hoped by these words to evoke in herself scorn for him and to defend herself from him, but she did not succeed in this. Everything went against her, especially that cursed music.

"Thus the episode ended, and on Sunday the guests gathered and they played together again.

## CHAPTER XXIII

"I THINK it is superfluous to remark that I was very ostentatious; there would not be any living in our general society if it were not for ostentation. Thus on that Sunday I took the greatest pains to arrange for our dinner and for the evening musicale. I myself ordered the things for dinner and invited the guests.

"At six o'clock the guests had arrived, and he also, in evening dress with diamonds shirt studs of bad taste. He was free and easy, made haste to answer all questions with a smile of sympathy and appreciation—you know what I mean, with that peculiar expression that signifies that everything you say or do is exactly what he expected. I remarked now with especial satisfaction everything about him calculated to give an unfavorable impression, because all this served to calm me, and prove that he stood in my wife's eyes on such a low level that, as she said, she could not possibly descend to it. I did not allow myself to be jealous. In the first place, I had already been through the pangs of that torment and needed rest; in the second place, I wanted to have faith in my wife's asseverations, and I did believe in them. But in spite of the fact that I was not jealous, still I was not at my ease with either of them, and during the dinner and the first half of the evening before the music began, I kept watching their motions and glances all the time.

"The dinner was like any dinner—dull and conventional. The music began rather early. Oh, how well I remember all the details of that evening. I remember how he brought his fiddle, opened the box, took off the

covering which had been embroidered for him by some lady, took out the instrument and began to tune it. I remember how my wife sat with a pretendedly indifferent face under which I saw that she was hiding great diffidence,—the diffidence caused chiefly by distrust of her own ability,—how she took her seat at the grand piano with the same affected look and struck the usual *a*, which was followed by the pizzicato of the fiddle and the getting into tune. I remember how, then, they looked at each other, glanced at the audience, and then made some remark, and the music began. He struck the first chords. His face grew grave, stern, and sympathetic, and as he bent his head to listen to the sounds he produced, he placed his fingers cautiously on the strings. The piano replied. And it began.” ....

Pozdnushchik paused and several times emitted his peculiar sounds. He started to speak again but snuffed through his nose and again paused.

“They played Beethoven’s Kreutzer Sonata,” he finally went on to say. “Do you know the first *presto*—You know it?” he cried. “U! U! U!.... That sonata is a terrible thing. And especially that movement. And music in general is a terrible thing. I cannot comprehend it. What is music? What does it do? And why does it have the effect it has? They say music has the effect of elevating the soul—rubbish! falsehood! It has its effect, it has a terrible effect,—I am speaking about its effect on me,—but not at all by elevating the soul. Its effect is neither to elevate nor to degrade, but to excite. How can I explain it to you? Music makes me forget myself, my actual position; it transports me into another state not my natural one; under the influence of music it seems to me that I feel what I do not really feel, that I understand what I do not really understand, that I can do what I can’t do. I explain this by the fact that music acts like gaping or laughing; I am not sleepy but I gape, looking at any one else who is gaping; I have nothing to laugh at, but I laugh when I hear others laugh.

“Music instantaneously transports me into that mental



condition in which he who composed it found himself I blend my soul with his, and together with him am transported from one mood to another; but why this is so I cannot tell. For instance, he who composed the Kreutzer Sonata — Beethoven — he knew why he was in that mood. That mood impelled him to do certain things, and therefore that mood meant something for him, but it means nothing for me. And that is why music excites and does not bring to any conclusion. Now they play a military march; the soldiers move forward under its strains, and the music accomplishes something; they play dance music and I dance, and the music accomplishes something; they perform a mass, I take the sacrament, again the music accomplishes its purpose. But in other cases there is only excitement, and it is impossible to tell what to do in this state of mind. And that is why music is so terrible, why it sometimes has such an awful effect. In China, music is regulated by government, and this is as it should be. Is it permissible that any one whatever shall hypnotize another person, or many persons, and then do with them what he pleases? And especially if this hypnotizer happens to be the first immoral man that comes along.

“And indeed it is a terrible means to place in any one’s hands. For example, how could any one play this Kreutzer Sonata, the first *presto*, in a drawing-room before ladies dressed *décolletées*? To play that *presto* and then to applaud it, and then to eat ices and talk over the last bit of scandal? These things should be played only in certain grave, significant conditions, and only then when certain deeds corresponding to such music are to be accomplished: first play the music and perform that which this music was composed for. But to call forth an energy which is not consonant with the place or the time, and an impulse which does not manifest itself in anything, cannot fail to have a baneful effect. On me, at least, it had a horrible effect. It seemed to me that entirely new impulses, new possibilities, were revealed to me in myself, such as I had never dreamed of before

"‘This is the way I should live and think — not at all as I have lived and thought hitherto,’ seemed to be whispered into my soul. What this new thing was I now knew I could not explain even to myself, but the consciousness of this new state of mind was very delightful. All those faces — his and my wife’s among them — presented themselves in a new light.

"After the *allegro* they played the beautiful but rather commonplace and far from original *andante*, with the cheap variations and the weak *finale*. Then at the request of the guests they played other things, first an elegy by Ernst and then various other trifles. All this was very good, but it did not produce on me a hundredth part of the impression which the first did. But all the music had the same background as the impression which the first produced.

"I felt gay and happy all the evening. I never saw my wife look as she did that evening: her gleaming eyes, her gravity and serenity of expression while she was playing, her perfectly melting mood, her tender, pathetic, and blissful smile, after they had finished playing; I saw it all, but attributed to it no other significance other than that she was experiencing the same thing as I was; that before her, as before me, new and hitherto unexampled feelings were revealed, dimly rising in her consciousness. The evening was pronounced a great success, and when it was over the guests took their departure.

"Knowing that I was to be going to the district meeting in two days, Trukhachevsky, on bidding me farewell, said that he hoped that when he next came to Moscow he should have another pleasant evening like that. From this remark I was able to conclude that he did not deem it possible to visit my house during my absence, and that was agreeable to me. It seemed clear that as I should not return before his departure we should not meet again.

"For the first time I shook hands with him with genuine pleasure, and I thanked him for the gratification he had afforded us. He also bade my wife a final farewell.

and their final farewell seemed to me most natural and proper. Everything was admirable. Both my wife and I were very well satisfied with the evening.

## CHAPTER XXIV

"Two days later I started for my district, taking leave of my wife in the happiest and calmest frame of mind.

"In the district there was always a pile of work and a special life, a special little world. For two days I worked ten hours a day in my office. On the third day a letter from my wife was brought to me in the office. I read it then and there.

"She wrote about the children, about her uncle, about the nurse-girl, about the things she had bought, and mentioned as something perfectly commonplace the fact that Trukhachevsky had been to call, and had brought the music he had promised, and that he had offered to come and play again, but that she had declined.

"I did not remember that he had promised to bring any music. I had supposed that he had taken his final leave at that time, and so this gave me an unpleasant surprise. But I was so deeply engrossed in business that I could not stop to think it over, and it was not until evening, when I returned to my room, that I re-read her letter.

"Besides the fact that Trukhachevsky had called again in my absence, the whole tone of the letter seemed to me unnatural. The frantic wild beast of jealousy roared in his cage and wanted to break forth; but I was afraid of this beast and I made haste to shut him up.

"‘What a vile feeling this jealousy is,’ I said to myself. ‘What can be more natural than what she has written?’

"And I lay on my bed and tried to think of the business which I should have to attend to the next day. I never go to sleep very quickly during these sessions in a new place, but this time I dropped asleep almost im-

mediately. But as you know it often happens, I suddenly felt something like an electric shock, and started up wide awake. As I woke, I woke with a thought of her, of my carnal love for her, and of Trukhachevsky, and how all had been accomplished between him and her. Horror and rage crushed my heart. But I tried to reason myself out of it.

“‘What rubbish!’ I exclaimed. ‘There is not the slightest basis for any such suspicions. And how can I humiliate myself and her by harboring such horrible thoughts? Here is some one in the nature of a hired fiddler, with a reputation of being disreputable, and could a respectable woman, the mother of a family, *my wife*, suddenly fall a victim to such a man? What an absurdity.’

“That is what I argued on one side, but on the other, came these thoughts:—

“‘How could it fail to be so? Why is it not the simplest and most comprehensible thing? Was it not for that I married her? Was it not for that I lived with her? Was it not that which makes me necessary to her? And would not therefore another man, this musician, be likewise necessary to her? He is an unmarried man, healthy, — I remember how lustily he crunched the gristle in the cutlet, and put the glass of wine to his red lips, — he is well-fed, sleek, and not only without principles, but evidently guided by the theory that it is best to take advantage of whatever pleasures present themselves. And between them is the tie of music; the subtle lust of the senses. What can restrain him? She? Yes, but who is she? She is as much of a riddle as she ever has been. I don’t know her. I know her only as an animal; and nothing can restrain an animal, or is likely to.’

“Only at that instant I recalled their faces that evening after they had played the Kreutzer Sonata, and while they were performing some passionate piece, — I have forgotten what it was, — something sentimental to the degree of obscenity.

“‘How could I have come away?’ I asked myself, as I recalled their faces. ‘Was it not perfectly evident

that the fatal step was taken by them that evening, and was it not evident that even from that evening on, not only was there no bar between them, but that both of them — she especially — felt some sense of shame after what happened to them? I recalled with what a soft, pathetic, and blissful smile she wiped away the perspiration from her heated face, as I approached the piano. Even then they avoided looking at each other, and only at dinner when he poured her out some water did they look at each other, and timidly smile. I remembered with horror that glance which I had intercepted, and that almost imperceptible smile.

“‘Yes, the fatal step has been taken,’ said a voice within me; and instantly another voice seemed to say quite the contrary. ‘You are crazy; this cannot be,’ said this second voice.

“It was painful for me to lie there in the darkness. I lighted a match, and then it seemed to me terrible to be in that little room with its yellow wall-paper. I began to smoke a cigarette, and, as is always the case when one turns round in the same circle of irresolvable contradictions, I smoked; and I smoked one cigarette after another, for the purpose of befogging my mind and not seeing the contradictions.

“I did not sleep all night, and at five o’clock, having made up my mind that I could remain no longer in such a state of tension, but would instantly go back, I got up, wakened the bell-boy who waited on me, and sent him after horses. I sent a note to the Session stating that I had been called back to Moscow on extraordinary business, and therefore begged them to let another member take my place. At eight o’clock I took my seat in the tarantas and started.”

## CHAPTER XXV

THE conductor came through the train, and noticing that our candle was almost burned out, extinguished it instead of putting in another. Out-of-doors it was

beginning to grow light. Pozdnuishef ceased speaking and sighed heavily all the time the conductor was in the carriage. He proceeded with his story only when the conductor had taken his departure, and the only sound we could hear in the semi-darkness of the carriage was the rattle of the windows and regular snore of the merchant's clerk. In the twilight of the dawn I could not make out Pozdnuishef's face at all. I could only hear his passionate voice growing ever more and more excited : —

"I had to travel thirty-five versts by tarantas and eight hours by rail. It was splendid traveling with horses. It was frosty autumnal weather with a brilliant sun, — you know that kind of weather when the tires leave their print on the slippery road. The roads were smooth, the light was dazzling, and the atmosphere was exhilarating. Yes, it was jolly traveling by tarantas. As soon as it grew light, and I was fairly on my way, my heart felt lighter.

"As I looked at the horses, at the fields, at the persons I met, I forgot what my errand was. It sometimes seemed to me that I was simply out for a drive, and that there was nothing whatever to stir me so. And I felt particularly happy at thus forgetting myself. If by chance it occurred to me where I was bound, I said to myself : —

" 'Wait and see what will be; don't think about it now.' "

"About half-way an event happened which delayed me, and still more tended to distract my attention; the tarantas broke down, and it was necessary to mend it. This break-down had a great significance because it caused me to reach Moscow at midnight instead of at five o'clock as we had expected, and home at one o'clock, for I missed the express, and was obliged to take a way train. The search for a telyega, the mending of the tarantas, the settlement of the bill, tea at an inn, the conversation with the hostler, — all this served to divert me more and more. By twilight everything was ready, and I was on my way once more, and during

the evening it was still pleasanter traveling than by day. There was a young moon, a slight touch of frost, the roads were still excellent, and so were the horses, the postilion was jolly, and so I traveled on and enjoyed myself, scarce thinking at all of what was awaiting me; or perhaps I enjoyed myself especially because I knew what was awaiting me, and I was having my last taste of the joys of life.

"But this calm state of mind, the power of controlling my feelings, came to an end as soon as I ceased traveling with the horses. As soon as I entered the railway carriage an entirely different state of things began. This eight-hour journey by rail was something horrible to me, and I shall never forget it as long as I live. Either because, as soon as I entered the carriage I vividly imagined myself as having already reached the end, or because railway travel has an exciting effect on people. As soon as I took my seat I had no longer any control over my imagination, which ceaselessly, with extraordinary vividness, began to bring up before me pictures kindling my jealousy; one after another they arose and always to the same effect: what had taken place during my absence, and how she had deceived me! I was on fire with indignation, wrath, and a peculiar sense of frenzy, caused by my humiliation, as I contemplated these pictures, and I could not tear myself away from them, could not help gazing at them, could not rub them out, could not help evoking them. And then the more I contemplated these imaginary pictures the more I was convinced of their reality. The vividness with which these pictures presented themselves before me seemed to serve as a proof of the actuality of what I imagined. A kind of a devil, perfectly against my will, suggested and stimulated the most horrible suggestions. A conversation I had once with Trukhachevsky's brother occurred to me, and with a sort of enthusiasm I lacerated my heart with this conversation, applying it to Trukhachevsky and my wife.

"It had taken place long before, but it came back clearly to me. I remember that once, Trukhachevsky's

brother, in reply to a question whether he ever went to certain houses, stated that no decent man would ever go to such places, where there was danger of contracting disease, and that it was vile and disgusting; one could always find some society woman to serve his purpose. And now here was his brother and he had found my wife:

“‘To be sure she is no longer young; she has a tooth missing on one side of her mouth, her face is somewhat swollen,’ I said, trying to look from his standpoint. ‘But what difference does that make? One must take what one can get. Yes, he is conferring a favor on her to take her as his mistress,’ said I, to myself. ‘Then besides, there is no danger with her. .... No, it is impossible!’ I exclaimed in horror. ‘There is no possibility of it, not the least, and there is not the slightest basis for any such conjectures. Has she not told me that to her it was a humiliating thought that I could be jealous of him. .... Yes, but she is a liar, always a liar,’ I would cry, and then begin the same thing over again.

“There were only two passengers in my carriage; an old woman with her husband, both of them very silent, and they got out at the first stop, and I was left alone. I was like a wild beast in a cage; now I would jump up and rush to the window, then staggering I would walk back and forth through the aisle trying to make the train go faster; but the carriage, with all its seats and its window-panes, shook just exactly as ours is doing now.” ....

And Pozdnuishef sprang to his feet and took a few steps and then sat down again.

“Oh, I dread, I dread these railway carriages—they fill me with horror—yes, I dread them awfully,” he went on saying. “I said to myself, ‘I must think of something else. All right, let me think of the landlord of the inn where I took tea. Well! Then before my eyes would arise the long-bearded dvornik and his grandson, a boy about as old as my Vasya.

“‘My Vasya! He will see a musician kissing his mother. What will happen to his poor soul at the sight! But what will she care? She is in love.’



‘And again would arise the same visions.

“‘No, no! Well I will think about the inspection of the hospital. Yesterday that sick man complained of the doctor. A doctor with mustaches just like Trukhachevsky’s. .... And how brazenly he — they both deceived me, when he said that he was going away.’ ....

“And again it would begin. Everything I thought of had some connection with them. I suffered awfully. My chief suffering lay in my ignorance, in the uncertainty of it all, in my question whether I ought to love her or hate her. These sufferings were so intense that I remember the temptation came into my mind with great fascination to go out on the track and throw myself under the train on the rails, and so end it. Then, at least, there would be no further doubt. The one thing that prevented me from doing so was my self-pity which was the immediate source of my hatred of her. Toward him, also, I had a strange feeling of hatred, and a consciousness of my humiliation and of his victory, but toward her my hatred was awful.

“‘It is impossible to put an end to myself and to leave her behind. I must do something to make her suffer, so that she may appreciate that I have suffered,’ I said to myself.

“I got out at all the stations in order to divert my mind. At one station I noticed that people were drinking in the buffet, and I immediately fortified myself with vodka. Next me stood a Jew and he also was drinking. He spoke to me and that I might not be alone in my carriage I went with him into his third-class compartment, though it was filthy and full of smoke and littered with the husks of seeds. There I sat down next him, and he went on chatting and relating anecdotes. I listened to him, but did not take in what he said because I kept thinking of my own affairs. He noticed this and tried to attract my attention; then I got up and went back to my own carriage.

“‘I must think it all over again,’ I said to myself, ‘whether what I think is true and whether there is any foundation for my anguish.’ I sat down, desiring calmly

to think it over, but instantly in place of calm deliberation, the same tumult of thought began; in place of argument, pictures and figments of the imagination.

“‘How often have I not tortured myself so,’ I said to myself, for I remembered similar paroxysms of jealousy in times gone by, ‘and then there was no ground for them. And so now, possibly, nay probably, I shall find her calmly sleeping; she will wake up and be glad to see me, and I shall be conscious both in her words and in her looks that nothing has taken place and that my suspicions were groundless. Oh! how delightful that would be!’

“‘But no, this has been so too frequently and now it will be so no longer’ said some inner voice, and once more it would begin anew. Ah! what a punishment was here! I should not take a young man to a syphilitic hospital to cure him of his passion for women, but into my own soul, and give him a glimpse of the fiends that were rending it. You see it was horrible that I claimed an undoubted absolute right to her body just as if it had been my own body, and at the same time I was conscious that I could not control that body of hers, that it was not mine, and that she had the power to dispose of it as she chose, and that she did not choose to dispose of it as I wished. I could not even do anything to her or to him. He, like Vanka the cellarer before he was hanged, will sing a song of how he had kissed her on her sugary lips and the like. He would have the best of me. And with her I could do even less. If she had not yet done anything out of the way, but had it in mind to,—and I know that she did,—the case is still worse; it would be better to have it done with, so that I might know, so as to have this uncertainty settled.

“I could not tell what I desired. I desired her not to want what she could not help wanting. This was absolute madness.

## CHAPTER XXVI

"At the next to the last station, when the conductor came along to take the tickets, I picked up my belongings and went out on the platform, and the consciousness of what was about to take place still further increased my agitation. I became cold, and my jaws trembled so that my teeth chattered. Mechanically I followed the crowd out of the station, engaged an *izvoshchik*, took my seat in his cab and drove away. As I drove along, glancing at the occasional pedestrians, at the *dvorniks* and the shadows cast by the street lamps and my cab, now in front and now behind, my mind seemed to be a blank. By the time we had driven half a verst from the station my feet became cold, and I remembered that I had removed my woolen stockings in the train and put them into my gripsack.

"Where is my grip? Have I brought it with me?"

"Yes, I had. 'But where is my hamper?'"

"Then I remembered that I had entirely forgotten about my baggage; but while I was thinking about it, I found my receipt and decided that it was not worth while to return for it, and so I drove home.

"In spite of my endeavors, I can never remember to this day what my state of mind was at that time, — what I thought, what I desired, I cannot tell. I only remember that I was conscious that something terrible and very vital in my life was in preparation. Whether this important event proceeded from the fact that I thought so or because I foreboded it, I do not know. Perhaps after what happened subsequently, all the preceding moments have taken on a gloomy shade in my recollection.

"I reached the doorstep. It was one o'clock. Several *izvoshchiks* were standing in front of the door waiting for fares in the light cast by the windows—the lighted windows were in our apartment, in the 'hall,' and the drawing-room. I made no attempt to explain to myself why our windows were still lighted so late

at night, but still expectant of something dreadful about to happen, I mounted the steps and rang the bell. Yegor, the lackey, a good-natured, zealous, but extremely stupid fellow, answered it. The first thing that struck my eyes in the vestibule was a cloak hanging on a peg with other outside garments. I ought to have been surprised, but I was not, because it was what I expected.

“‘It is true,’ I said to myself.

“When I asked Yegor who was there and he mentioned Trukhachevsky, I asked:—

“‘Is there any one else with them?’ and he said:—

“‘No one.’ I remember that in his reply, there was an intonation, as if he felt he was giving me a pleasure in dispelling my apprehension that any one else was there.

“‘It is true, it is true,’ I seemed to say to myself.

“‘But the children?’

“‘Thank God, they are well. They have been asleep for a long time.’

“I could not breathe freely, nor could I prevent the trembling of my lower jaw.

“‘Yes, of course, it is not as I thought it might be; whereas formerly I imagined some misfortune and yet found everything all right, as usual, now it was not usual, now it was altogether what I had imagined and fancied that I only imagined, but it was now real. It was all ....’

“I almost began to sob, but instantly a fiend suggested:—

“‘Shed tears, be sentimental; but they will calmly separate; there will be no proof, and you will be forever in doubt and torment.’

“Thereupon my self-pity vanished, and in its place came a strange feeling of gladness that my torture was now at an end, that I could punish her, could get rid of her, that I could give free course to my wrath. And I gave free course to my wrath—I became a wild beast, fierce and sly.

“‘No matter, no matter,’ I said to Yegor, who was

about to go to the drawing-room, 'attend to this instead: take an *izvoshchik*, and go as quickly as you can to the station for my luggage; here is the receipt. Off with you!'

"He went into the corridor to get his *paletot*. Fearing that he might disturb them, I accompanied him to his little room, and waited till he had got his things on. In the drawing-room, just through the wall, I could hear the sound of voices, and the clatter of knives and dishes. They were eating, and had not heard the bell.

"'If only no one leaves the room now,' I said to myself.

"Yegor put on his *paletot* trimmed with *astrakhan* wool, and started. I let him out and shut the door behind him, and I felt a sense of dread at the idea of being left alone, of having to act instantly.

"How? I did not know as yet. All I knew was that all was ended, that there could be no longer any doubt as to her guilt, and that I should presently punish her, and put an end to my relations with her.

"Hitherto I had been troubled with vacillation, and I had said to myself: 'Maybe it is not so, maybe you are mistaken; ' now this was at an end. Everything was now irrevocably decided. Clandestinely! alone with him! at night! This proved perfect forgetfulness of everything, or something even worse. Such audacity, such insolence, in crime was deliberately adopted in order that its very insolence might serve as a proof of innocence. All was clear, there could be no doubt! I was afraid of only one thing, — that they might escape, might invent some new deception, and deprive me of manifest proof, and the possibility of convincing myself. And so as to catch them as promptly as possible I went, not through the drawing-room, but through the corridor and the nursery, on my tiptoes, into the 'hall' where they were sitting.

"In the first nursery-room the boys were sound asleep; in the second nursery-room the nurse stirred, and was on the point of waking up; and I imagined to myself what she would think if she knew it all; and

then such a sense of self-pity came over me at this thought that I could not restrain my tears, and in order not to wake the children I ran out, on my tiptoes, into the corridor and into my own room, flung myself down on my divan, and sobbed.

“‘I, an upright man .... I, the son of my own parents .... I, who have dreamed all my life of the delights of domestic happiness .... I, a husband who have never been unfaithful to my wife!.... And here she, the mother of five children, and she is embracing a musician because he has red lips!

“‘No, she is not human. She is a bitch, a vile bitch! Next to the room where sleep her children, for whom, all her life, she has pretended to feel affection. And to write me what she wrote! And so insolently to throw herself into my arms! And how do I know? perhaps this same sort of thing has been taking place all the time! Who knows but the children whom I have always supposed to be mine may not have some lackey for their father!

“‘And if I had come home to-morrow she would have met me with her hair becomingly done up, and her graceful, indolent movements.’ All the time I seemed to see her fascinating, abhorrent face .... ‘and this wild beast of jealousy would have taken his position forever in my heart, and torn it. What will the nurse think? .... and Yegor? .... and poor Lizotchka? She already has her suspicions. And this brazen impudence, and this falsehood! .... And this animal sensuality which I know so well?’ I said to myself.

“‘I tried to get up, but could not. My heart throbbed so that I could not stand on my legs.

“‘Yes, I shall die of a stroke. She will have killed me. That is just what she wants! What would it be to her to kill me? Indeed, it would be quite too advantageous, and I will not bestow that gratification on her. Yes, here I am sitting, and yonder they are eating and talking together, and ....

“‘Yes, in spite of the fact that she is no longer in her first youth, he will not despise her .... still, she is not

bad-looking, and, what is the main thing, at least she is not dangerous for his precious health. Why, then, have I not strangled her already?' I asked myself, recalling that moment a week before when I drove her out of my library, and then smashed things. I had a vivid remembrance of the state of mind in which I was then; and not only had the remembrance, but I was conscious of the same necessity of striking, of destroying, as I had been conscious of before. I remember how I wanted to do something, and how all considerations except those that were necessary for action vanished from my mind. I came into the state of a wild animal, or rather, of a man under the influence of physical excitement in time of danger, when he acts definitely, deliberately, but without losing a single instant, and all the time with a single object in view.

"The first thing I did was to take off my boots, and then, in my stocking feet, I went to the wall, where various weapons and daggers were hung up over the divan, and I took down a curved Damascus dagger, which had never been used, and was very keen. I drew it out of its sheath. I remember the sheath slipped down behind the divan, and I remember I said to myself:—

"'I must find it afterward or else it will get lost.' Then I took off my paletot which I had all the time been wearing and, gliding along in my stockings, I went *there*.

## CHAPTER XXVII

"AND stepping up stealthily, I suddenly threw open the door. I remember the expression of both of their faces. I remember that expression because it afforded me a tormenting pleasure—it was an expression of horror. That was the very thing I needed! I shall never forget the expression of despairing horror which came into their faces the first second when they saw me. He was seated, it seems, at the table, but when he saw me or heard me, he leaped to his feet and stood with

his back against the sideboard. His face bore the one unmistakable expression of horror. On her face also was an expression of horror, but there was something else blended with it. If it had not been for that something else, maybe what happened would not have happened; but in the expression of her face there was, or so there seemed to me at the first instant, a look of disappointment, of annoyance that her pleasure in his love and her enjoyment with him were interrupted. It was as if she desired nothing else than to be left undisturbed in her present happiness. This expression and the other lingered but an instant on their faces. The expression of horror on his face instantly grew into a look, which asked the question: 'Is it possible to lie out of it or not? If it is possible, now is the time to begin. If not, then something else must be done — but what?'

"He looked questioningly at her. On her face the expression of annoyance and disappointment changed as it seemed to me when she looked at him into one of solicitude for him.

"I stood for an instant on the threshold holding the dagger behind my back.

"During that second he smiled, and in a voice so indifferent that it was ludicrous, he began:—

"‘We have been having some music.’

"‘Why! I was not expecting you,’ she began at the same instant, adopting his tone.

"But neither he nor she finished their sentences. The very same madness which I had experienced a week before took possession of me. Once more I felt the necessity of destroying something, of using violence; once more I felt the ecstasy of madness and I yielded to it. Neither finished what they were saying. The something else which he was afraid of began, and it swept away instantaneously all that they had to say.

"I threw myself on her, still concealing the dagger in order that he might not prevent me from striking her in the side under the breast. I had chosen the spot at the very beginning. The instant I threw myself on her he



saw my design, and with an action which I never expected from him, he seized me by the arm and cried:—

“‘Think what you .... Help!’

“I wrenched away my arm, and without saying a word rushed at him. His eyes met mine; he suddenly turned as pale as a sheet, even to the lips, his eyes glittered with a peculiar light, and most unexpectedly to me he slipped under the piano and darted out of the door. I was just starting to rush after him when I was detained by a weight on my left arm. It was she! I tried to break away. She clung all the more heavily to my arm and would not let me go. This unexpected hindrance, the weight of her and her touch which was repulsive to me, still further inflamed my anger. I was conscious of being in a perfect frenzy and that I ought to be terrible, and I exulted in it. I drew back my left arm with all my might and struck her full in the face with my elbow. She screamed and let go my arm. I started to chase him, but remembered that it would be ridiculous for a man to chase his wife’s lover in his stockings, and I did not want to be ridiculous, but I desired to be terrible.

“Notwithstanding the terrible frenzy in which I found myself, I never for an instant forgot the impression which I might produce on others, and this impression, even to a certain degree, governed me. I came back to her. She had fallen on a couch, and with her hand held up to her eyes, which I had bruised, was looking at me. In her face were such terror and hatred of me, her enemy, as a rat might show when the trap in which it had been caught was held up. At all events I could see nothing else in her face except terror and hatred of me. It was precisely the same terror and hatred which love to another would naturally evoke. But possibly I should have restrained myself and not done what I did if she had held her tongue. But she suddenly began to speak, and she seized my hand which held the dagger:—

“‘Come to your senses. What are you going to do?

What is the matter with you? There has been nothing no harm, I swear it.'

"I should have still delayed, but these last words, from which I drew exactly the opposite conclusion, that is, that my worst fears were realized, required an answer. And the answer had to correspond with the mood to which I had wrought myself up, which had gone on in a *crescendo* and was bound to reach its climax. Madness also has its laws.

"'Do not lie, you wretch,' I cried, and with my left hand I seized her by the arm, but she tore herself away. Then, still clutching the dagger, I grasped her by the throat, pressed her over backward and began to strangle her. What a muscular throat she had! She grasped my hands with both hers, tearing them away from her throat, and I, as if I had been waiting for this opportunity, struck her with the dagger into the side under the ribs.

"When men say that in an attack of madness they don't remember what they did, it is all false, all nonsense. I remember every detail, and not for one second did I fail to remember. The more violently I kindled within me the flames of my madness, the more brightly burned the light of consciousness, so that I could not fail to see all that I did. I knew every second what I was doing. I cannot say that I knew in advance what I was going to do, but at the instant I did anything, and perhaps a little before I knew what I was up to, as if for the purpose of being able to repent, in order that I might say to myself: 'I might have stopped.' I knew that I struck below the ribs and that the dagger would penetrate. At the moment I was doing this, I knew that I was doing something, something awful, something which I had never done before and which would have awful consequences. But this consciousness flashed through my mind like lightning and was instantly followed by the deed. The deed made itself conscious with unexampled clearness. I felt and I remember the momentary resistance of her corset and of something else, and then the sinking of the blade

into the soft parts of her body. She seized the dagger with her hands, wounding them, but she did not stop me.

"Afterward, in the prison, while a moral revolution was working itself out in me, I thought much about that moment—what I might have done, and I thought it all over. I remember that a second, only a second, before the deed was accomplished, I had the terrible consciousness that I was killing and had killed a woman—a defenseless woman—my wife. I recall the horror of this consciousness, and therefore I conclude—and indeed I dimly remember—that having plunged the dagger in, I immediately withdrew it, with the desire to remedy what I had done and to put a stop to it. I stood for a second motionless, waiting to see what would happen,—and whether I might undo what I had done.

"She sprang to her feet, and shrieked:—

"‘Nurse, he has killed me.’

"The nurse had heard the disturbance and was already on the threshold. I was still standing, expectant and irresolute. But at that instant the blood gushed from under her corset.

"Then only I realized that it was impossible to remedy it, and I instantly concluded that it was not necessary, that I myself did not wish to have it remedied, and that I had done the very thing I was in duty bound to do. I lingered until she fell and the nurse, with the exclamation ‘Heavens,’<sup>1</sup> rushed to her, and then I flung the dagger down and left the room.

"‘I must not get excited, I must know what I am doing,’ said I to myself, looking neither at her nor at the nurse. The nurse screamed and called to the maid. I went along the corridor, and stopping to send the maid, I went to my room.

"‘What must I do now?’ I asked myself, and instantly made up my mind. As soon as I reached my library I went directly to the wall and took down a revolver and contemplated it. It was loaded, and I laid it on the table. Then I picked up the sheath from behind the divan, and finally I sat down on the divan.

<sup>1</sup> *Batyushki*, "Fathers."

"I sat long in that attitude. My mind was without a thought, without a recollection. I heard some commotion *there*. I heard some one arrive, then some one else. Then I heard and saw Yegor bringing my luggage into my library. As if that would be useful to any one now.

"'Have you heard what has happened?' I asked 'Tell the dvornik to inform the police.'

"He said nothing, but went out. I got up, closed the door, got my cigarettes and matches, and began to smoke. I had not finished smoking my cigarette before drowsiness seized me and overcame me. I think I must have slept two hours. I remember I dreamed that she and I were friends, that we had quarreled, but had made it up, and that some trifle stood in our way; but still we were friends.

"A knock on the door awakened me.

"'It is the police,' I thought as I woke; 'it seems I must have killed her. But maybe it is she herself and nothing has happened.'

"The knocking at the door was repeated. I did not answer, but kept trying to decide the question:—

"'Had all that really taken place or not?.... Yes, it had.' I remembered the resistance of the corset and the sinking of the dagger, and a cold chill ran down my back.

"'Yes, it is true. Yes, now I must have my turn,' said I to myself. But though I said this I knew I should not kill myself. Nevertheless, I got up and once more took the revolver into my hand. But strange as it may seem, I remember how many times before I had been near suicide, as, for instance, that very day on the railway train, and it had seemed to me very easy for the very reason that I thought that by that means I could fill her with consternation.

"Now I could not kill myself or think of such a thing. 'Why should I do it?' I asked myself; and there was no answer.

"The knocking still continued at the door.

"'Yes, first I must find out who is knocking, I shall have time enough afterward....'

"I laid the revolver down and covered it with a newspaper. Then I went to the door and drew back the bolt. It was my wife's sister, a worthy but stupid widow.

"'Vasya, what does this mean?' she asked, and her ever ready tears began to gush forth.

"'What do you want?' I asked harshly. I saw that this was entirely unnecessary and that I had no reason to be gruff with her, but I could not adopt any other tone.

"'Vasya, she is dying. Ivan Zakharuitch says so.'

"Ivan Zakharuitch was her doctor, her adviser.

"'Why, is he here?' I asked, and all my rage against her flamed up once more. 'Well, suppose she is.'

"'Vasya, go to her. Oh, how horrible this is!' she exclaimed.

"'Must I go to her?' was the question that arose in my mind, and I instantly decided that I must go, that probably when a husband had killed his wife as I had, he must always go to her, that it was the proper thing to do.

"'If it is always done, then I must surely go,' I said to myself. 'Yes, if it is necessary to, I shall; I can still kill myself,' I reasoned in regard to my intention of blowing my brains out; and I followed her.

"'Now there will be phrases and grimaces, but I will not let them affect me,' said I to myself.

"'Wait,' said I to my sister. 'It is stupid to go without my boots, let me at least put on my slippers.'

## CHAPTER XXVIII

"ANOTHER remarkable thing:—Once more as I left my room and went through the familiar rooms, once more arose the hope that nothing had taken place, but the odor of the vile medical appliances, iodoform, the carbolic acid, struck my senses.

"Yes, all was a reality. As I went through the corridor past the nursery I caught sight of Lizanka. She

looked at me with frightened eyes. It seemed to me then that all five of the children were there and that all of them were looking at me.

"I went to the door and the chambermaid opened it from the inside and passed out. The first thing that struck my eyes was her light gray gown lying on a chair and all discolored with blood. She was lying on our double bed, on my own side of it, — for it was easier of access on that side, and her knees were raised. She was placed in a very sloping position on pillows alone, with her *kofta* unbuttoned. Something had been placed over the wound. The room was full of the oppressive odor of iodoform. I was more than all struck by her swollen face, black and blue, — part of her nose and under her eyes. It was the effect of the blow that I had given her with my elbow, when she was trying to hold me back. Her beauty had all vanished, and her appearance was decidedly repulsive to me. I paused on the threshold.

"‘Go to her, go,’ said her sister.

"‘Yes, she probably wants to confess to me,’ I thought. ‘Shall I forgive her? Yes, she is dying and it is permissible to forgive her,’ I said mentally, striving to be magnanimous.

"I went close to her. She with difficulty raised her eyes to me — one of them was blackened, and she said with difficulty, with pauses between the words : —

"‘You have had your way .... you have killed me.’

"And in her face, through her physical suffering and even the proximity of death, could be seen the old expression of cold animal hatred which I knew so well.

"‘The children .... anyway .... you shall not have .... She’ indicating her sister ‘will take them.’

"As to what was the principal thing for me — her guilt, her unfaithfulness, she did not consider it worth while to say a word.

"‘Yes .... delight yourself in what you have done.’ said she, glancing at the door and sobbing. On the threshold stood her sister with the children. ‘Oh, what have you done?’

"I looked at the children, at her bruised and discolored face, and for the first time forgot myself, my rights, my pride, for the first time recognized the human being in her. And so petty seemed all that had offended me, all my jealousy, and so significant the deed that I had done that I had the impulse to bow down to her hand and to say, 'Forgive me,' but I had not the courage.

"She remained silent, closing her eyes, evidently too weak to speak further.

"Then her mutilated face was distorted with a frown. She feebly pushed me away.

" 'Why has all this taken place, why?'

" 'Forgive me,' I cried.

" 'Forgive? What nonsense! .... If only I had not to die!' she cried, raising herself up, and her deliriously flashing eyes were fastened on me.

" 'Yes, you have wreaked your will. I hate you. Ah! Oh,' she screamed, evidently out of her head, evidently afraid of something. 'Shoot, I am not afraid. .... Only kill us all. .... He has gone. .... He has gone.'

"The delirium continued to the very end. She did not recognize any one. On the same day at noon she died. Before that, at eight o'clock in the morning, I was arrested and taken to prison. And there, while I was confined for eleven months waiting for my trial, I had a chance to meditate on myself and my past life, and I came to understand it. On the third day I began to comprehend. On the third day they took me *there*."

He wanted to say something more, but not having the strength to hold back his sobs, he paused. Collecting his strength, he continued:—

"I began to comprehend only when I beheld her in her coffin." He sobbed, but immediately continued hastily:—

"Only when I beheld her dead face did I understand what I had done. I comprehended that I, I had killed her, that it was through me that she, who had been living, moving, warm, was now motionless, wax-like, and cold, and that there was no way of ever again making it right,—never, never again. He who has not lived

through this cannot comprehend, U! U! U!" he cried several times, and said no more.

We sat a long time in silence. He sobbed and trembled before me. His face became pinched and long, and his mouth widened to its fullest extent.

"Yes," he said suddenly, "if I had known what I know now, then everything would have been entirely different. I would not have married her for .... I would not have married at all."

Again we were long silent.

"Well, good-by — Prostitute."

He turned from me and lay down on the seat, covering himself with his plaid.

At the station where I was to leave the train — it was eight o'clock in the morning — I went up to him to bid him farewell. Either he was asleep or was pretending to be sleeping; he did not move. I touched his hand. He uncovered himself, and it was plain that he had not been asleep.

"Proshchajte — Farewell," said I, offering him my hand. He took it and almost smiled, but so piteously that I felt like weeping.

"Yes, good-by — Prostitute," said he, repeating the very word with which he had closed his tale.



# SEQUEL TO THE KREUTZER SONATA

WITH reference to the subject treated of in my story, "The Kreutzer Sonata," I have received, and am still receiving, many letters from strangers who ask me to explain my opinion clearly and simply. I will do my best to meet their wish, *i.e.* briefly to express the essence of what I wished that story to convey, and the conclusions which may, I think, be drawn from it.

\* \* \* \* \*

*First.* I wished to say that a firm conviction (supported by false science) has established itself among all classes of our society, to the effect that sexual intercourse is necessary for health, and that marriage not being always possible, sexual intercourse without marriage, and binding the man to nothing beyond a mere money payment, is quite natural and a thing to be encouraged. This conviction has become so general and so firm that parents, acting on the advice of doctors, arrange opportunities of vice for their children, and governments (which should not exist unless they care for the moral well-being of their citizens) organize vice. That is to say, they organize a whole class of women who have to perish body and soul to satisfy the alleged needs of men. And unmarried people addict themselves to vice with quiet consciences.

And I wished to say that this is wrong. It cannot be necessary to destroy some people, body and soul, for the health of others, any more than it can be necessary for some people to drink the blood of others in order to be healthy.

The deduction which seems to me naturally to follow from the above, is that we should not yield to this error and fraud. And in order not to yield, it is necessary, first of all, not to give credence to immoral doctrines, no matter on what pseudo-sciences they may rest for support. Secondly, we must realize that it is a breach of the simplest demands of morality to enter into sexual intercourse in which people either free themselves from the possible consequences of the act, *i.e.* from the children who may be born, or leave the whole burden to the mother, or take precautions to prevent the birth of children. It is a meanness, and young people who do not wish to be mean should not do it.

To be able to abstain they should lead a natural life: not drink, nor eat meat, nor overeat, nor avoid labor — exhausting labor, not mere gymnastics, or other play. But besides this they should not, even in thought, admit the possibility of connection with strange women, any more than they would with their mothers, sisters, near relations, or with the wives of their friends. Any man can find hundreds of examples around him showing that continence is possible, and less dangerous and less harmful to health than incontinence. That is the first thing.

*Second.* In all classes of our society conjugal infidelity has become very common. And this is so because sexual intercourse is regarded not only as a pleasure, and as necessary to health, but as being something poetic and elevated, and a blessing to life.

And I think such conduct is wrong, and the deduction to be made is that it should not be indulged in.

And in order not to indulge in it, it is necessary that this way of regarding sexual love should be changed. Men and women should be educated at home and by public opinion, both before and after marriage, not as now to consider being in love and the sexual affection connected therewith as a poetic and elevated condition, but as being an animal condition, degrading to man. And an infringement of the marriage promise of faithfulness should be held by public opinion to be at least

as shameful as the infringement of a monetary obligation, or as a commercial fraud. And it should not be extolled in novels, verses, songs, and operas, as is now commonly done. That is the second thing.

*Third.* Again, as a consequence of the false importance attached to sexual love, the birth of children in our society has lost its meaning. Instead of being the object and justification of conjugal relations, it is now a hindrance to the pleasant continuation of amorous intercourse. And, therefore, both outside marriage and among married people (on the advice of the servants of medical science), the use of means to prevent the woman from conceiving children has spread, and people continue conjugal intercourse during the months when the woman is bearing and nursing the child. This used not to be done formerly, and it is not done now in the patriarchal peasant families.

And I think that such conduct is wrong.

It is bad to use means to prevent the birth of children, both because so doing frees people from the cares and troubles caused by children, which should serve to redeem sexual love, and also because it comes very near to what is most revolting to our conscience — murder. And incontinence during pregnancy and nursing is bad, because it wastes the woman's bodily, and especially her spiritual, strength.

The deduction from this is, that these things should not be done. And in order not to do them it should be understood that continence, which is a necessary condition of man's self-respect when he is unmarried, is even more necessary in the married state. That is the third thing.

*Fourth.* In our society children are considered either an unfortunate accident, or a hindrance to enjoyment, or (when a preconcerted number are produced) as a sort of delectation. And, in accordance with such a view, the children are not educated to face the problems of human life which await them, as beings endowed with reason and love, but they are merely treated with an eye to the enjoyment they can afford to their parents.

Consequently, human children are brought up like the young of animals; the chief care of the parents not being to prepare them for an activity worthy of men, but to feed them as well as possible, to increase their stature, and to make them clean, white, plump, and handsome. In all this, the parents are supported by the pseudo-science of medicine. And if things are done differently among the lower classes, this results merely from their lack of means. The view held is the same in all classes. And in pampered children, as in all overfed animals, an irresistible sensuality shows itself at an abnormally early age, and is the cause of terrible suffering before maturity. Apparel, reading, performances, music, dances, rich food, and all the surroundings of their life, from the pictures on boxes of sweets to novels and stories and poems, increase the sensuality; and the result is that sexual vices and diseases become customary among children of both sexes, and often retain their hold after maturity is reached.

And I think this is wrong. And the deduction to be made is, that human children should not be educated like animals, but that other things should be aimed at in the bringing up of children besides a handsome, pampered body. That is the fourth thing.

*Fifth.* In our society, where the falling in love of young men and women, which after all has sexual love at its root, is considered poetical and is extolled as the highest aim of human effort (as witness all the art and poetry of our society), young people devote the best time of their life, — the men to spying out, tracking, and obtaining possession of the most desirable objects of love, whether in amours or in marriage; and the women and girls to trapping and luring men into amours or marriages.

And thus people's best strength is spent in efforts that are not only unproductive, but harmful. Most of the senseless luxury of our lives results from this. From this comes the idleness of men and the shamelessness of women, who do not disdain to expose parts of their body that excite desire, in obedience to fashions admittedly borrowed from notoriously depraved women.

And I believe that this is wrong.

It is wrong because the aim—union with the object of one's love, with or without marriage, however it may be poeticized—is an aim unworthy of man, just as the aim of obtaining for oneself delicate and plentiful food is unworthy of man, though considered by many as the supreme aim of life.

The deduction to be made is, that we must cease to think that physical love is something particularly elevated. We must understand that no aim that we consider worthy of man—whether it be the service of humanity, of one's country, of science, or of art (let alone the service of God)—is ever reached by means of union with the object of one's love (whether with or without a marriage rite). On the contrary, being in love, and union with the beloved object, never makes it easier to gain any end worthy of man, but always makes it more difficult.

That is the fifth consideration.

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That is essentially what I wished to express, and thought I had expressed, in my story. And it seemed to me that the remedy for the evils referred to in these propositions might be discussed, but that it was impossible not to agree with the propositions themselves. This seemed to me so: first, because these propositions quite coincide with what we know of the progress of humanity, which is always proceeding from dissoluteness toward more and more of chastity, and coincide also with the moral consciousness of society,—with our consciences, which always condemn dissoluteness and esteem chastity. Secondly, because these propositions are nothing more than inevitable deductions from the teaching of the Gospels, which we profess, or at least (even if unconsciously) acknowledge to be the basis of our conceptions of morality.

But I was mistaken.

No one, indeed, directly contradicted the positions that it is wrong to be vicious, either before marriage or after a marriage ceremony, that it is wrong artificially

to prevent childbirth, that children should not be made playthings of, and that amorous union should not be placed above all other considerations. In brief, no one denied that chastity is better than dissoluteness. But people say: "If it is better not to marry, evidently we should do what is better. But if all men do so, the human race will cease, and it cannot be an ideal for humanity to destroy itself." The extinction of the race, however is not a new idea. It is an article of faith among religious people, and to scientists it is an inevitable deduction from observation of the cooling of the sun. Leaving all that aside, however, the above rejoinder rests on a great, widely diffused, and ancient misunderstanding. It is said: "If people act up to the ideal of complete chastity, they will be exterminated; therefore, the ideal is false." But, intentionally or unintentionally, those who say this confuse two different things—a precept and an ideal.

Chastity is not a precept, or a rule, but an ideal. And an ideal is only then an *ideal*, when its accomplishment is possible only in *idea*, in thought; and when it appears attainable only in infinity, when, therefore, the possibility of approaching it is endless. If the ideal could be attained now, or if we could even imagine its accomplishment, it would cease to be an ideal.

Such is Christ's ideal—the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth; an ideal already foretold by the prophets who spoke of a time when all men shall be taught of God, and shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; when the lions shall lie down with the lambs, and all beings shall be united by love. The whole meaning of man's life lies in progress toward that ideal. And, therefore, the striving toward the Christian ideal in its entirety, and toward chastity as one of its conditions, is far from rendering life impossible. On the contrary, the absence of this ideal would destroy progress and thus render real life impossible.

The argument that the human race will cease if men strive resolutely toward chastity, is like the argument

sometimes adduced, that the human race will perish if men strive resolutely to learn to love their friends, their enemies, and all that lives, instead of continuing the struggle for existence. Such arguments proceed from not understanding that there are two different methods of moral guidance. As there are two ways of directing a traveler, so there are two ways of supplying moral guidance to a man seeking after truth. One way is to tell the man of things he will meet on his road and by which he can shape his course. The other method is merely to give him the general direction by a compass he carries. The compass always shows one immutable direction, and therefore shows him every deviation he makes from the right line.

The first method of moral guidance is to give definite external rules. Certain actions are defined, and man is told that he should, or should not, perform them.

"Observe the Sabbath," "Be circumcised," "Do not steal," "Do not drink intoxicants," "Do not take life," "Give tithes to the poor," "Wash and pray five times a day," "Be baptized," "Take communion," etc. Such are the injunctions of external religious teachings, Brahmanist, Buddhist, Mohammedan, or Jewish, and of the Church teaching, miscalled—Christian.

The other method is that of pointing out to man a perfection he cannot attain, but which he is conscious of striving toward. An ideal is pointed out, by referring to which man can always recognize the degree of his own deviation from the right course.

Love thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself! Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect! Such is Christ's teaching.

The proof of obedience to the external religious teachings lies in the concurrence of our actions with their injunctions. And such concurrence is possible.

The proof of obedience to Christ's teaching lies in a consciousness of our falling short of ideal perfection

The degree of advance is not seen, but the divergence from perfection is seen.

A man professing an external law is a man standing in the light of a lamp fixed to a post. He stands in the light and sees clearly, but has nowhere to advance to. A man following Christ's teaching is like a man carrying a lantern before him at the end of a pole. The light is ever before him, and ever impels him to follow it, by continually lighting up fresh ground and attracting him onward.

The Pharisee thanks God that he has done his whole duty. The rich young man has also done all from his youth upward, and does not understand what he yet lacks. Nor can they think otherwise. There is nothing before them toward which they might press on. Tithes paid; Sabbaths observed; parents honored; adultery, theft, murder, avoided. What more? For the follower of Christ's teaching, the attainment of each step toward perfection evokes the need of reaching a still higher step, whence another, higher yet, is revealed, and so on without end. The follower of Christ's law is always in the position of the publican. He is always conscious of his imperfections, not looking back at the road he has already traveled, but always seeing before him the road he has still to go, — over which he has not yet journeyed.

Therein Christ's teaching differs from all other religious teachings. It is not that the demands are different, but the manner of guiding people is different.

Christ did not legislate. He never established any institutions, and never instituted marriage. But men, accustomed to external teachings, and not understanding the nature of Christ's teaching, wished to feel themselves justified, as the Pharisee felt himself justified. And, in contradiction to the whole spirit of Christ's teaching, they concocted, out of its letter, an external code of rules called Church Doctrine, and supplanted Christ's true teaching of the ideal by this doctrine.

In relation to all the occurrences of life, the Church doctrine (calling itself Christian) supplied, instead of



Christ's ideal teaching, definitions and rules contrary to the spirit of that teaching. This has been done with reference to government, law, the army, the Church, Church services, and it has been done in regard to marriage. Although Christ not only never instituted marriage, but, if we must seek for external regulations, rather repudiated it ("leave thy wife and follow me"), the Church doctrine (professing to be Christian) has established marriage as a Christian institution. That is to say, it has defined certain external conditions under which sexual love is said to be quite innocent and right for a Christian.

But as in Christ's teaching there is no basis for the institution of marriage, it has resulted that people in our world have left one bank but have not reached the other. That is to say, they do not really believe in the Church definition of marriage, for they feel that such an institution has no basis in Christian teaching; but yet they do not discern Christ's ideal of complete chastity which the Church teaching hides, and they are thus left without guidance in sexual matters. And this explains the seemingly strange fact that among Jews, Mohammedans, Lamaists, and others, following religious teachings of a far lower grade than the Christian, but having exact external definitions of marriage, the family basis and conjugal fidelity is far more firmly established than in so-called Christian society.

Those people have a definite system of concubinage and polygamy and polyandry confined within certain limits. Among us complete dissoluteness exists: concubinage, polygamy, and polyandry confined by no limits and screened under the forms of monogamy.

Merely because the clergy, for money, perform a certain ceremony (called the marriage service) over some of those who come together, it is naively, or hypocritically, supposed that we are a monogamous people.

Christian marriage never existed or could exist, any more than Christian worship,<sup>1</sup> or Christian teachers and

<sup>1</sup> (Matt. vi. 5-12.) And when you pray be not like the hypocrites, who always pray in congregations, and stop at street-corners to pray, that they

fathers of the Church,<sup>1</sup> or Christian property, on Christian armies, or law courts, or governments. And this was understood by Christians of the first centuries.

The Christian's ideal is love to God and to his neighbor. It is renunciation of self for the service of God and man. But carnal love, marriage, is a serving of self, and is, therefore, at least a hindrance to the service of God and man, and consequently, from the Christian point of view, it is a fall, a sin.

Getting married cannot conduce to the service of God and man, even if the object of the marriage be the continuation of the human race. It is much simpler for people, instead of getting married to produce future children, to save and support those millions of children who are perishing around us for want of food for body and soul. A Christian could only get married without consciousness of a fall into sin, if he knew that all existing children were already provided for.

It is possible to reject Christ's teaching, that teaching which impregnates our whole life, and on which all our morality is based, but if we accept it, it is impossible not to recognize that it points to the ideal of complete chastity.

In the Gospels it is said plainly, and so that it cannot be explained away: first, that a husband should not

may be noticed by men. You see yourselves, that they have their reward. But thou, if thou prayest, go into thy closet, shut the door, and pray to the Father. And thy Father will see into thy soul and will repay thee. In praying do not babble with thy tongue, like play-actors, who expect their babbling to be heard. Be not as they, for your Father knows your needs before you open your mouth. And therefore, pray thus: Our Father, etc.

(John iv. 21-24.) Woman, believe me, the time is near, when you shall worship the father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You do not know whom you worship, but we worship him whom we know. But the time is near, and is now come, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and by deeds, for the Father requires such worshippers. God is a spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and by deeds.\*

<sup>1</sup> (Matt. xxiii. 8-10.) And be not called teachers, for you have one teacher, Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man on earth father, for you have one Father in heaven. And be not called masters, for you have one pastor, Christ.

\* The text of the verses referred to I take from Tolstoy's translation of the Four Gospels harmonized and translated. — (1880)

divorce his wife in order to take another,<sup>1</sup> but should live with her to whom he has united himself. Secondly, that it is sinful for any one (consequently for a married as well as for an unmarried man) to look on a woman as an object of pleasure.<sup>2</sup> And thirdly, that it is better for the unmarried not to marry at all, *i.e.* to be perfectly chaste.<sup>3</sup>

To very many people these thoughts will seem strange and even contradictory. And they are indeed contradictory, though not among themselves. The contradiction is to the whole tenor of our lives, and involuntarily a doubt arises: which is right? these thoughts, or the lives of millions of people including my own? This feeling I myself experienced intensely, when I was arriving at the convictions I am now expressing. I never expected that the trend of my thoughts would lead me to such a result as they actually brought me to. I was frightened at my own conclusions, and wished not to believe them, but there was no way to avoid them. And, however these conclusions may contradict the whole tenor of our lives, however much they contradict what I formerly thought and even expressed, I had to accept them.

"But all these are general considerations which may be correct, but which refer to Christ's teachings, and are binding only on those who profess that teaching. But

<sup>1</sup> (Matt. v. 31, 32.) It was also said: Whoever puts away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say to you, that if any one put away his wife, not only is he guilty of wantonness, but he leads her to adultery. And he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. (Matt. xix. 8.) He said to them: Moses on account of your coarseness let you divorce from your wives: but from the commencement this is not right.

<sup>2</sup> (Matt. v. 28, 29.) And every one who looks on a woman with desire, has done what is the same as committing adultery with her. If thine eye ensnare thee, tear it out and cast it from thee: for it is more profitable for thee to lose one eye than that the whole of you should burn.

<sup>3</sup> (Matt. xix. 10-12.) And his disciples said to him: If a man's duty to his wife be such, it is better not to marry. And he said to them: Not all can comprehend this in their hearts, but only those to whom it is given. For there are people who are virgin from lust from their mother's womb; and there are some who have been deprived of their desire by men, and there are some who have become pure for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to take this understanding into his heart, let him take it.

life is life, and it will not do merely to indicate Christ's unattainable ideal ahead of us, and to leave men with nothing but that ideal, and with no definite guidance on a question so burning, so general, and which causes such tremendous misfortunes.

"A young and passionate man will be, at first, attracted by the ideal, but will fail to hold to it and will stumble. And not knowing, and not professing any rules, he will fall into utter depravity."

Thus do people generally argue.

"Christ's ideal is unattainable, and therefore cannot serve to guide us in life; one may talk of it, dream of it, but it is inapplicable to life, and so we must abandon it. What we require is not an ideal, but a precept. A guidance which should correspond to our strength, and suit the average moral strength of our society; an honest Church marriage; or even a marriage not quite honest, in which one of the partners (as the men in our society) may have had intercourse with other partners; or, say, civil marriage; or even (continuing along the same road) a Japanese marriage for a term, — and why not go on till we reach the brothel?"

It is maintained to be preferable to street vice. And this is just the difficulty. Once allow yourself to lower the ideal to suit man's weakness, and there is no finding any limit at which to stop.

But the fact is that such reasoning is false from the very start. It is not true that the ideal of infinite perfection cannot be a guide in life; and that it is necessary, either to throw it up, saying that it is useless to me as I cannot reach it, or else to tone it down to a level that suits my weakness.

Such reasoning is as if a mariner were to say to himself: "Because I cannot keep to the line indicated by my compass, I will cease to look at it and will throw it overboard" (*i.e.* will reject the ideal), or else, "I will fasten the needle of the compass in the position which corresponds to the direction in which I am at present sailing" (*i.e.* will lower the ideal to suit my weakness).

The ideal of perfection given by Christ is not a fantasy, or an object for rhetorical sermons; but it is the most essential guide to moral life any man can have. It is like the compass, which is the most necessary and accessible instrument for the guidance of mariners. Only the former must be trusted as implicitly as the latter.

In whatever position a man may be, Christ's teaching of the ideal is always sufficient to furnish him with the surest guidance as to what he should—and should not—do. But he must trust that teaching completely, and that teaching alone, ceasing to follow any other, just as the steersman must trust to the compass and desist from watching what is on either hand, and from guiding himself by such observations.

To guide oneself by Christ's teachings, or by the compass, one must know how to make use of them. To this end it is above all necessary to be conscious of one's position. We must not be afraid to define precisely how far we have deviated from the line of perfection. There is no position in which man can say that he has reached it, and has nothing more to strive toward.

Such is the case concerning man's efforts to reach the Christian ideal in general, and the same is true about chastity in particular. If we imagine to ourselves people in the most diverse positions, with reference to the sex-question, from innocent childhood to marriage of an incontinent character, Christ's teaching, and the ideal he has shown us, will always, at each step between the two, supply clear and definite guidance as to what should, or should not, be done.

What should a pure lad or girl do? Keep themselves pure and free from temptation in order to devote their full powers to the service of God and man, strive after complete chastity in thought and wish.

"What should a youth, or girl, do who has fallen into temptation and is engrossed by vague desire, or by love of some one, and who has thus lost some part of their capacity to serve God and man?"

Exactly the same. Not yield to sin (knowing that

yielding will not free them from temptation, but will only increase it); and strive ever toward more and more of chastity, in order to be able more completely to serve God and man.

“What are those to do who have failed in the struggle and have fallen?”

Consider their fall not as a legitimate pleasure (as it is now regarded when justified by a marriage ceremony), nor as a casual pleasure which may be repeated with others, nor as a misfortune, when the fall has occurred with an inferior and without a ceremony; but consider the first fall as the only one, as an entry into actual and indissoluble marriage.

This entry into marriage, by the consequent birth of children, restricts those who are thus united to a new and more limited form of service to God and man. Before marriage they were free to serve God and man directly and in most varied ways. Marriage narrows their scope of action, and demands from them the rearing and educating of offspring, who may serve God and man in the future.

“What should a man and woman do who are married, and who, in accordance with that position, are performing this limited service of God and man, by rearing and educating children?”

Again the same thing. Together strive to be free from temptation. Try to cleanse themselves from the sin of their mutual relation, which hinders general and individual service of God and man; and seek to replace sexual love by the pure relationship of brother and sister.

And so it is not true that we cannot be guided by Christ's ideal, because of its being too lofty, complete, and unattainable.

If we cannot make use of it, this is only because we lie to ourselves and deceive ourselves. For if we say that we must have some rule more practicable than Christ's ideal, or else not reaching Christ's ideal, we shall become vicious, — we do not really say that Christ's ideal is too high for us, but merely that we do not believe in it, and do not want to define our actions by it.

To say that when once we have fallen, we shall have begun a loose life, is merely to state that we have decided beforehand that to fall with one who is a social inferior is not a sin, but only an amusement, a distraction, which need not be remedied by the permanent union of marriage. Whereas, if we understood that such a fall is indeed a sin, which must and can be redeemed only by indissoluble marriage, and by all the activity resulting from the birth of children in marriage, then the fall would certainly not be the cause of our plunging into vice.

To act otherwise would be as if a husbandman learning to sow were to abandon a field he had sown badly, and go on sowing a second and a third field, and were to take into account only the one field which succeeded. Evidently such a man would waste much land and seed, and would not learn to sow properly.

Keep but in view the ideal of chastity, and consider every fall (no matter whose or with whom) as the one, immutable lifelong marriage, and it will be clear that the guidance given by Christ is not only sufficient, but is the only guidance possible.

It is said, "Man is weak, and more should not be demanded of him than he can accomplish." But this is like saying, "My hand is weak, I cannot draw the straight line I wish to, therefore, to make it easier, I will take a crooked or broken line as my model." Really, the weaker my hand, the more am I in need of a perfect model.

It is impossible, having heard Christ's ideal teaching, to act as if we knew it not, and to replace it by external ordinances. Christ's ideal teaching is before humanity now just because it is suitable for our guidance in man's present stage of development. Humanity has outgrown the period of external religious ordinances — they are no longer believed in.

The Christian teaching of the ideal is the only one that can guide humanity. We neither can nor may replace Christ's ideal by external rules; but we must firmly keep this ideal before us in all its purity, and above all, we must trust it.

## 170 SEQUEL TO KREUTZER SONATA

While the mariner sailed near the shore it was possible to say to him, "Keep to that cliff, cape, or tower." But a time comes when the ship is far from shore, and it should and can be guided only by the unattainable star and the compass indicating a direction.

And both are given us.



# THE DEKABRISTS<sup>1</sup>

## A ROMANCE

### FIRST FRAGMENT

#### I

IT happened not long ago, in the reign of the Emperor Alexander II., — in our epoch of civilization, of progress, of *questions*, of the regeneration of Russia, etc., — the time when the victorious Russian army had returned from Sevastopol, which had just been surrendered to the enemy, when all Russia was celebrating its triumph in the destruction of the Black Sea fleet, and White-walled Moscow had gone forth to meet and congratulate the remains of the crews of that fleet, and reach them a good Russian glass of vodka, and in accordance with the good Russian custom offer them the bread and salt of hospitality,<sup>2</sup> and bow their

<sup>1</sup> The three chapters of the romance here printed under the name of the "Dekabristui" were written even before the author had begun "War and Peace." At this time he was planning a story, the principal characters of which were to be the conspirators who planned the December Insurrection; but he did not go on with it because, in his efforts at bringing to life the time of the Dekabrists, he involuntarily went back in thought to the preceding time period, to the past of his heroes. Gradually before the author opened ever deeper and deeper the sources of those phenomena which he was designing to describe: the families, the education, the social conditions, etc., of his chosen characters. At last he paused at the time of the war with Napoleon, which he described in "War and Peace." At the end of that romance are evident the symptoms of that awakening which was reflected in the events of December 27, 1825.

Afterward the author once more took up "The Dekabrists," and wrote two other beginnings, which are here printed.

Such was the origin of the fragments here presented; it is probable that it will never be finished. — PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

<sup>2</sup> *Khiyeb-sol.*

heads to the ground; at the time when Russia in the person of perspicacious virgin-politicians bewailed the destruction of its favorite dreams about celebrating the Te Deum in the cathedral of Saint Sophia and the severely felt loss of two great men dear to the fatherland, who had been killed during the war (one carried away by his desire to hear the Te Deum as soon as possible in the said cathedral and who fell on the plains of Vallachia, for that very reason leaving two squadrons of hussars on those same plains; the other an invaluable man distributing tea, other people's money, and sheets to the wounded, and not stealing either); at the time when from all sides, from all branches of human activity, in Russia, great men sprang up like mushrooms—colonels, administrators, economists, writers, orators, and simply great men, without any vocation or object; at the time when at the jubilee of a Moscow actor, public sentiment, strengthened by a toast, began to demand the punishment of all criminals; when formidable committees from Petersburg were galloping away toward the south, to apprehend, discover, and punish the evil-doers of the commissary department; when in all the cities, dinners with speeches were given to the heroes of Sevastopol, and these men who came with amputated arms and legs were given trifles as remembrances, and they were met on bridges and highways; at the time when oratorical talents were so rapidly spreading among the people that a single tapster everywhere and on every occasion wrote and printed, and, having learned by heart, made at dinners such powerful addresses that the keepers of order had, as a general thing, to employ repressive measures against the eloquence of the tapster; when in the English club itself they reserved a special room for the discussion of public affairs; when new periodicals made their appearance under the most diversified appellations—journals developing European principles on a European soil, but with a Russian point of view, and journals exclusively on Russian soil developing Russian principles, but with a European point of view—when suddenly

so many periodicals appeared that it seemed as if all names were exhausted—the *Viestnik* (Messenger), and the *Slovo* (Word), and the *Besyeda* (Discussion), and the *Nabliudatyl* (Spectator), and the *Zvezda* (Star), and the *Orel* (Eagle), and many others—and notwithstanding this, new ones and ever new ones kept appearing; a time when pleiads of writers and thinkers kept appearing, proving that science is popular, and is not popular, and is unpopular, and the like, and a pleiad of writer-artists, describing the grove and the sunrise and the thunder-storm and the love of the Russian maiden and the laziness of a single chinovnik and the bad behavior of many other functionaries; at the time when from all sides came up *questions*—as in 1856 they called all those currents of circumstances to which no one could obtain a categorical answer—questions of military schools,<sup>1</sup> of universities, of the censorship, of verbal law-proceedings relating to finance, banks, police, emancipation, and many others, and all were trying to raise still new questions, all were giving experimental answers to them, were writing, reading, talking, arranging projects, all the time wishing to correct, to annihilate, to change, and all the Russians, as one man, found themselves in indescribable enthusiasm,—a state of things which has been witnessed twice in Russia during the nineteenth century—the first time when in 1812 we thrashed Napoleon I., and the second time when in 1856 Napoleon III. thrashed us—great and never-to-be-forgotten epoch of the regeneration of the Russian people. Like that Frenchman, who said that no one had ever lived at all who had not lived during the great French Revolution, so I also do not hesitate to say that any one who was not living in Russia in the year '56 does not know what life is.

He who writes these lines not only lived at that time, but was actively at work then. Moreover, he himself stayed in one of the trenches before Sevastopol for several weeks. He wrote about the Crimean war a work which brought him great fame, and in this he clearly and circumstantially described how the soldiers fired their

<sup>1</sup> *Voprosui kadetskikh korpusov.*

guns from the bastions, how wounds were bandaged at the ambulance stations, and how the dead were buried in the graveyard. Having accomplished these exploits, the writer of these lines spent some time at the heart of the empire, in a rocket establishment, where he received his laurels for his exploits. He saw the enthusiasm of both capitals and of the whole people, and he experienced in himself how Russia was able to reward genuine service. The powerful ones of that world all sought his acquaintance, shook hands with him, gave him dinners, kept inviting him out, and, in order to elicit from him the particulars of the war, told him their own sentiments. Consequently the writer of these lines may well appreciate that great unforgettable epoch.

But that does not concern us now.

One evening about this time two conveyances and a sledge were standing at the entrance of the best hotel in Moscow. A young man was just going in to inquire about rooms. An old man was sitting in one of the carriages with two ladies, and was discussing about the Kuznetsky Bridge at the time of the French Invasion.

It was the continuation of a conversation which had been begun on their first arrival at Moscow, and now the old, white-bearded man, with his fur shuba thrown open, was calmly going on with it, still sitting in the carriage, as if he intended to spend the night there. His wife and daughter listened to him, but kept looking at the door, not without impatience. The young man came out again accompanied by the Swiss and the hall-boy.

"Well, how is it, Sergyei?" asked the mother, looking out so that the lamplight fell on her weary face.

Either because it was his usual custom, or to prevent the Swiss from mistaking him for a lackey, as he was dressed in a half-shuba, Sergyei replied in French that they could have rooms, and he opened the carriage door. The old man for an instant glanced at his son, and fell back once more into the dark depths of the carriage, as if this affair did not concern him at all.

"There was no theater then."

"Pierre," said his wife, pulling him by the cloak, but he continued:—

"Madame Chalmé was on the Tverskaya ...."

From the depths of the carriage rang out a young, merry laugh.

"Papa, come, — you are talking nonsense."

The old man seemed at last to realize that they had reached their destination, and he looked round.

"Come, step out."

He pulled his hat over his eyes and obediently got out of the carriage. The Swiss offered him his arm, but, convinced that the old man was perfectly able to take care of himself, he immediately proffered his services to the elder lady.

Natalya Nikolayevna, the lady, by her sable cloak, and by the slowness of her motions in getting out, and by the way in which she leaned heavily on his arm, and by the way in which, without hesitation, she immediately took her son's arm and walked up the steps, impressed the man as a woman of great distinction. He could not distinguish the young woman from the maids that dismounted from the second carriage; she, just as they, carried a bundle and a pipe, and walked behind. Only by her laughing, and the fact that she called the old man "father," did he know it.

"Not that way, papa, turn to the right," said she, detaining him by the sleeve of his coat. "To the right."

And on the stairway, above the stamping of feet, the opening of doors, and the panting of the elderly lady, was heard the same laughter which had rung out in the carriage, and which any one hearing would have surely exclaimed: "What a jolly laugh! I wish I could laugh like that."

The son, Sergyer, had been busied with all the material conditions on the way; and, while busied with them, made up for his lack of knowledge by the energy characteristic of his five and twenty years and his bustling activity, which filled him with satisfaction. Twenty times, at least, and apparently without any sufficient cause, dressed in but a single paletot, he had run down

to the sledge and up the steps again, shivering with the cold, and taking two or three steps at a time with his long, young legs. Natalya Nikolayevna begged him not to catch cold, but he assured her that there was no danger, and he kept giving orders, slamming doors, and going and coming; and, even after he was convinced that everything now rested on the servants and muzhiks alone, he several times made a tour of all the rooms, entering the drawing-room by one door and going out by another, trying to find something more to do.

"Tell me, papa, will you go to the bath? Do you know where it is?" he asked.

Papa was in a brown study, and seemed to be entirely unable to account for his present environment. He was slow in replying. He heard the words, but they made no impression on him. Suddenly he comprehended. "Yes, yes, yes; please find out;...at the Kamennoy Most."

The head of the family, with quick, nervous step, crossed the room and sat down in an arm-chair.

"Well, now we must decide what is to be done, — how to get settled," said he. "Help me, children; be quick about it! Be good and take hold and get things arranged, and then to-morrow we will send Serozha with a note to sister Mary Ivanovna, to Nikitin, or we will go ourselves. How is that, Natasha? But now let us get settled."

"To-morrow is Sunday; I hope that you will go to service first, before you do anything else, Pierre," said his wife, who was kneeling before a trunk and opening it.

"Oh, it is Sunday, is it? Assuredly; we will go to the Uspyensky Cathedral. That will note the beginning of our return. My God! when I recall the last time I was in the Uspyensky Cathedral.... do you remember, Natasha? But that is not the matter in hand."

And the head of the family leaped up from the chair in which he had only just sat down.

"But now we must get established."

Yet, without doing anything to help, he walked from one room into the other. "Tell me, will you drink some tea? Or are you tired, and would you rather rest?"

"Yes, yes," replied his wife, taking something from the trunk, "but I thought you were going to the bath."

"Yes.... in my day it used to be on the Kamennoi Most. Serozha, just go and find out if the baths are still at the Kamennoi Most. — Here, Serozha and I will take this room. Serozha, do you like this one?"

But Serozha had already gone to find out about the baths. "No," the old man went on to say, "that won't do at all. You won't have a passage directly into the drawing-room. What do you think about it, Natasha?"

"Don't you worry, Pierre, everything will be arranged," replied Natasha from the next room, into which the muzhiks were carrying various articles. But Pierre had come under the influence of the excitement and enthusiasm caused by his return.

"See here, don't disturb Serozha's things; there, they've brought his snow-shoes into the drawing-room." And he himself picked them up, and with extraordinary carefulness, as if the whole future order of their establishment depended on it, placed them against the lintel of the door, and pressed them close to it. But the shoes would not stay put, and as soon as Pierre had left them they fell with a crash across the door. Natalya Nikolayevna frowned and shuddered, but, when she saw the cause of the disturbance, she said: —

"Sonya, pick them up, my love."

"Pick them up, my love," echoed her husband. "And I am going to see the landlord. Don't make any changes in our arrangements. We must talk it all over with him first."

"Better send for him, Pierre. Why do you disturb yourself?"

Pierre acquiesced in this.

"Sonya, do you attend to this, please.... M. Cavalier; tell him that we want to talk things over with him."

"Chevalier, papa," said Sonya, and she started to go. Natalya Nikolayevna, who was giving orders in a low

voice, and moving about quietly from room to room, now with a drawer, now with a pipe, now with a cushion, gradually and imperceptibly reducing the heaps of articles into order, and getting everything into its place, remarked, as she passed Sonya:—

“Don’t go yourself; send a servant.”

While the man was gone after the landlord, Pierre employed his spare moments, under the pretext of assisting his wife, in rumpling up some of her gowns, and then he tumbled over a half-emptied trunk. Catching by the wall to keep from falling, the Dekabrist looked round with a smile. His wife, it seemed, was too busy to notice; but Sonya looked at him with such mischievous eyes that it seemed as if she were asking his permission to laugh out loud. He readily gave her that permission, and laughed himself with such a hearty laugh that all who were in the room, his wife as well as the maid-servant and the muzhik, joined in.

This laughter still more cheered up the old man; he discovered that the divan in the room taken by his wife and daughter was placed inconveniently for them, notwithstanding the fact that they assured him to the contrary and begged him not to trouble himself. Just as he, with the assistance of the muzhik, was trying to move it to another place, the French landlord entered the room.

“You asked for me?” asked the landlord, curtly; and, as a proof of his indifference, if not his disdain, he deliberately took out his handkerchief, deliberately unfolded it, and deliberately blew his nose.

“Yes, my dear friend,” said Piotr Ivanovitch, approaching him. “You see, we ourselves do not know how long we shall be here, my wife and I.” And Piotr Ivanovitch, who had the weakness of seeing an intimate in every man, began to tell him his circumstances and plans.

Mr. Chevalier did not share this way of men, and was not interested in the particulars communicated by Piotr Ivanovitch; but the excellent French which the Dekabrist spoke,—a French which, as every one knows, has



something of the nature of a patent of respectability in Russia, — and the aristocratic ways of the newcomers, caused him to have a higher opinion of them than before.

“In what way can I aid you?” he asked.

This question did not embarrass Piotr Ivanovitch. He expressed his desire to have rooms, tea, a samovar, luncheon, dinner, food for his servants, — in a word, all those things for which hotels are intended to provide; and when Mr. Chevalier, amazed at the innocence of the old man, who, it may be surmised, thought that he had reached the Trukhmensky steppe, or that all these things were to be furnished as a free gift, explained that his desires would be fully gratified, Piotr Ivanovitch reached the height of enthusiasm.

“There, that is excellent! very good! Then we will arrange it so. Now; how then, please....”

But he began to feel ashamed of talking about himself exclusively, and so he proceeded to ask Mr. Chevalier about his family and affairs.

Sergyei Petrovitch, returning, showed evident signs of dissatisfaction at his father's behavior. He noticed the landlord's irritation, and he reminded his father of the bath. But Piotr Ivanovitch was greatly interested in the question how a French hotel could succeed in Moscow in 1856, and how Madame Chevalier spent her time. At last the landlord bowed, and asked if there was anything they wished to order.

“Will you have some tea, Natasia. Yes? Tea, then, if you please, and we will have another talk, *mon cher monsieur!* — What a splendid man!”

“But are you going to the bath, papa?”

“Oh, then we don't need any tea.”

Thus the only result of the conference with the newcomers was snatched away from the landlord.

Accordingly Piotr Ivanovitch was now proud and happy with the arrangements that he had made. The drivers who came to get their vodka-money annoyed him because Serozha had no small change, and Piotr Ivanovitch was about to send for the landlord again, when the

happy thought occurred to him that he ought not to be the only gay one that evening, and restored him to his good humor. He took out two three-ruble notes, and, pressing one into the hand of one of the drivers, said, "This is for you," — Piotr Ivanovitch had the custom of addressing all persons without exception, save the members of his own family, with the formal second person, plural, *vui* — "and this is for you," said he, thrusting the bank-note into the man's palm, somewhat as men do when they pay a doctor for his visit. After all these matters had been attended to, he went to his bath.

Sonya sat down on the divan, and, supporting her head on her hand, laughed heartily.

"Oh, how good it is, mamma; oh, how good it is!"

Then she put up her feet on the divan, stretched herself out, lay back, and thus fell asleep, with the sound, silent sleep of a girl of eighteen after a journey which had lasted a month and a half.

Natalya Nikolayevna, who was still busy in her sleeping-room, apparently heard with her maternal ear that Sonya was not stirring, and went in to see for herself. She took a cushion, and with her large white hand, raising the girl's rosy head, laid it gently on the cushion. Sonya sighed deeply, settled her shoulders, and let her head rest on the pillow, not saying "*merci*," but taking it as a matter of course.

"Not there, not there, Gavrilovna, Katya," said Natalya Nikolayevna, addressing the two maid-servants who were making a bed; and with one hand, as it were in passing, smoothing her daughter's disordered locks. Without delaying, and without haste, Natalya Nikolayevna put things in order, and by the time her husband and son returned everything was in readiness, — the trunks were removed from the rooms; in Pierre's sleeping-room everything was just as it had been for years and years at Irkutsk; his khalat, his pipe, his tobacco-box, his *can sucré*, the Gospels which he read at night, and even a little image fastened in some way above the beds, to the luxurious wall-hangings of the rooms of Chevalier, who did not employ this form of adornment, though that eve-

ning they made their appearance in all the rooms of the third suite of the hotel.

Natalya Nikolayevna, having got things arranged to rights, put on her collar and cuffs, which in spite of the long journey she had kept clean, brushed her hair, and sat down opposite the table. Her beautiful black eyes had a far-away look; she gazed, and rested!

It would seem that she rested, not from the labor of getting settled only, not from the journey only, not from her weary years only; she rested, it seemed, from her whole life; and the far distance into which she gazed, where in imagination she saw the living faces of dear ones, that was the rest for which she sighed. Whether it was the exploit of love which she had performed for her husband's sake, or the love which she had felt for her children when they were small, whether it was her heavy loss, or the peculiarity of her character, any one, looking at this woman, must have certainly comprehended that nothing more from her was to be expected, that she had already, and long ago, given herself to life, and that nothing remained for her. There remained a certain beautiful and melancholy dignity of worth, like old memories, like moonlight. It was impossible to imagine her otherwise than surrounded by reverence and all the amenities of life. That she should ever be hungry and eat ravenously, or that she should ever wear soiled linen, that she should ever stumble or forget to blow her nose, was utterly unthinkable. It was a physical impossibility! Why this was so, I do not know; but her every motion was majesty, grace, sympathy for all those that enjoyed the sight of her.

*"Sie pflegen und weben  
Himmliche Rosen ins irdische Leben."*

She knew that couplet and liked it, but she was not guided by it. Her whole nature was the expression of this thought; her whole life unconsciously devoted to the weaving of invisible roses into the lives of those with whom she came into contact. She accompanied her hus-

band to Siberia purely because she loved him ; she did what she might do for him, and she involuntarily did everything for him. She made his bed for him, she packed his things, she prepared his dinner and tea for him, and above all, she was always where he was, and greater happiness no woman could give her husband.

In the drawing-room the samovar was singing on the round table. Before it sat Natalya Nikolayevna. Sonya was wrinkling up her forehead and smiling under her mother's hand, which tickled her, when with trimmed finger-tips and shining cheeks and brows, — the father's bald spot was especially brilliant, — fresh clean linen and dark hair and beaming faces, the men came into the room.

"It has grown lighter since you have come in," said Natalya Nikolayevna. "Ye powers,<sup>1</sup> how white."

For years she had said this every Saturday, and every Saturday Pierre had experienced a sense of modesty and satisfaction. They sat down at the table ; there was a smell of tea and tobacco, the voices of the parents and the children were heard, and of the servants who in the same room were carrying away the cups. They recalled the amusing things which had happened on the road, they praised Sonya's mode of dressing her hair, they chatted and laughed. Geographically they had all been transported five thousand versts into an entirely different and alien environment, but morally they were that evening still at home, just the same as their peculiar lonely family life had made them. Of this there was to be no morrow. Piotr Ivanovitch sat down near the samovar and smoked his pipe. He was not gay at all.

"Well, here we are back again," said he, "and I am glad that we shall not see any one this evening ; this evening will be the last that we shall spend together as a family ;" and he drank these words down with a great swallow of tea.

"Why the last, Pierre ?"

"Why ? Because the young eagles have been taught to fly ; they will have to be building their own nests, and so they will be flying off each in his own direction." ....

<sup>1</sup> *Batyushka.*

"How absurd," exclaimed Sonya, taking his glass from him, and smiling as she smiled at everything. "The old nest is good enough."

"The old nest is a wretched nest; the father-eagle could not build it; he got into a cage; his young ones were hatched in the cage and he was let out only when his wings were no longer able to bear him aloft. No, the young eagles will have to build their nests higher, more successfully, nearer to the sun. They are his young, in order that his example may aid them; but the old eagle, as long as he has his eyes, will look out for them, and if he becomes blind will listen for them .... give me a little rum, more, more .... there, that will do!"

"Let us see who will leave the others first," remarked Sonya, giving her mother a fleeting glance, as if she reproached herself for speaking before her. "Let us see who will leave the others first," she repeated. "I have no fear for myself or for Serozha either."

Serozha was striding up and down the room and thinking how the next day he would order some new clothes, and trying to decide whether he would go himself or send for the tailor, and so he was not interested in the conversation between Sonya and his father.

Sonya laughed.

"What is the matter with you? What is it?" asked their father.

"You are younger than we are, papa, ever so much younger, that is a fact," said she, and again she laughed.

"How is that?" exclaimed the old man, and the gloomy frown on his brow melted away in an affectionate and, at the same time, rather scornful smile.

Natalya Nikolayevna leaned out from behind the samovar, which prevented her from seeing her husband.

"Sonya is right. You are only sixteen years old, Pierre. Serozha is younger in his feelings, but you are younger than he in spirit. I can foresee what he will do, but you are still capable of surprising me."

Whether it was that the old man recognized the justice of the remark, or being flattered by it did not know

what answer to make, he went on smoking in silence, drinking his tea, and only letting his eyes flash. But Serozha, with the egotism characteristic of youth, for the first time began to feel interested in what was said about him, joined the conversation, and assured them that he was really old, that his coming to Moscow and the new life which was opening before him did not rejoice him in the least, that he was perfectly calm in his thought and expectations of the future.

"Nevertheless this is the last evening," repeated Piotr Ivanovitch. "To-morrow it will no longer be the same."

And once more he filled up his glass with rum. And for some time longer he sat by the tea-table with an expression on his face as if he had much to say, but there was no one to listen. He kept pouring out the rum until his daughter surreptitiously carried away the bottle.

## II

When Mr. Chevalier returned to his own room, after he had been up-stairs to arrange for his guests, he communicated his observations concerning the newcomers to the partner of his life, who, dressed in laces and silk, had her place in the Paris fashion behind the desk; in the same room sat several of the *habitués* of the establishment. Serozha, while he was down-stairs, had noticed that room and its occupants. You, probably, have also noticed it if ever you have been in Moscow.

If you, a modest man, not acquainted with Moscow, have arrived too late for a dinner invitation, have been mistaken in your supposition that the hospitable Muscovites will invite you to dinner and they have not invited you, or if you simply desire to dine in the best hotel, you will go into the anteroom. Three or four lackeys will dart forward; one of them will take your shuba from you and congratulate you on the new year, or the carnival, or your return, or will simply remark that it is a long time since you were there, although you may never have been at that establishment in your life. You go in, and the first thing that strikes your eyes is a covered table,

spread, as it seems to you at the first instant, with an endless collection of edibles. But this is only an optical delusion, since the larger part of the space on this table is occupied by pheasants in their feathers, indigestible lobsters, baskets with scents, and pomade and vials with cosmetics and comfits. Only if you search carefully you will find vodka and a crust of bread with butter and a piece of fish under a wire fly-screen, perfectly useless in Moscow in the month of December, but there because they are used in that way in Paris.

A little farther on, beyond the table, you will see in front of you the room in which sits the French woman behind the desk, always with a disgusting exterior, and yet with the cleanest of cuffs and in the most charming of modish gowns. Next the Frenchwoman you will see an officer with unbuttoned coat, sipping vodka and reading a newspaper, and a pair of civil or military legs stretched out in a velvet chair, and you will hear a chatter of French and more or less genuine and hearty laughter.

If you wish to find out what is going on in that room, then I should advise you not to go into it, but simply to keep your eyes open as you go by, pretending that you want to obtain a tartine. Otherwise you would be greeted with a questioning silence and with the eyes of the *habitués* of the room fixed on you, and probably you will put your tail between your legs and take refuge at one of the tables in the big "hall" or in the winter garden. There no one will disturb you. These tables are for the general public, and there in your solitude you may call the *garçon* and order truffles, as much as you please. This room with the French woman exists for the select gilded youth of Moscow, and to become one of the chosen is not so easy as it may seem to you.

Mr. Chevalier, returning to this room, told his spouse that the man from Siberia was a bore, but on the other hand his son and daughter were young people such as could be brought up only in Siberia.

"You ought to look at the daughter, what a rose she is!"

"Oh, he loves fresh young women—this old man does!" exclaimed one of the guests, who was smoking a cigar.

The conversation, of course, was carried on in French, but I translate it into Russian, as I shall do throughout this story.

"Oh, I am very fond, too, of them," replied Mr. Chevalier. "Women are my passion. Don't you believe me?"

"Hear that, Madame Chevalier," cried a stout young Cossack officer, who was deeply in the debt of the establishment and liked to chat with the landlady.

"Why, you see he shares my taste," said Chevalier, tapping the stout officer on the epaulet.

"And so the little Sibiryatchka is pretty, is she?"

Chevalier put his fingers together and kissed them.

Whereupon ensued among the occupants a very gay and confidential conversation. It concerned the stout officer; he smiled as he listened to what was said about him.

"Can he have such mutable tastes," shouted one man through the laughter. "Mademoiselle Clarisse, you know Strugof likes above all things, next to women, hens' legs."

Although Mademoiselle Clarisse, from behind her desk, did not see the wit of this remark, she broke out into laughter as silvery as her bad teeth and declining years allowed.

"Has the Siberian girl awakened such thoughts in him?" and again they all laughed harder than ever. Even Mr. Chevalier almost died with laughing, adding, "*Ce vieux coquin*," and patting the Cossack officer on the head and shoulders.

"But who are they—these Sibiryaki—manufacturers or merchants?" asked one of the gentlemen when the laughter had somewhat subsided.

"Nikit! Go and ask the gentleman who has just come for his passport," said Mr. Chevalier. "'We Alexander, Autocrat.'" ....

Chevalier was just beginning to read the passport



which was brought him, when the Cossack officer snatched the paper out of his hands, but his face suddenly expressed amazement.

"Well, now, guess who it is," said he; "all of you know him by reputation."

"How can we guess, tell us." ....

"Well, Abd-el Kader, ha, ha, ha. .... Well, Cagliostro, ha, ha, ha. .... Well, then, Peter III., ha, ha, ha." ....

"Well, then, read for yourselves." ....

The Cossack officer unfolded the paper and read: the former Prince Piotr Ivanovitch and one of those Russian names which every one knows and pronounces with a certain respect and pleasure when speaking of any one bearing that name, as of a personal friend or intimate.

We will call it Labazof.

The Cossack officer vaguely remembered that this Piotr Labazof was a person of some consequence in '25, and that he was sent to the mines of Siberia as a convict, but why he was famous he did not remember very well.

The others knew nothing about it, and they replied:—

"Oh, yes, famous," just exactly as they would have likewise said "Famous" of Shakespeare who wrote the "*Æneid*"!

The most that they knew about him was what the stout officer said,—that he was the brother of Prince Ivan, uncle of the Chikins, the Countess Prunk, yes, "famous." ....

"Why, he must be very rich if he is a brother of Prince Ivan," remarked one of the young men. "If they have restored his estates to him. They have restored their property to some."

"How many of these exiles are coming back nowadays," remarked another person present. "Truly I don't believe there were so many sent as have already returned. Yes, Zhikinsky, tell us that story about the eighteenth of the month," said he, addressing an officer of light infantry, reputed as a clever story-teller.

"Yes, tell us it."

"In the first place, it is genuine truth and happened

here, at Chevalier's, in the large 'hall.' Three Dekabrists came here to dinner. They took seats at one table, they ate, they drank, they talked. Now opposite them was sitting a man of respectable appearance, of about the same age, and he kept listening to what they had to say about Siberia:—'And do you know Nerchinsk?'—'Why, yes, I lived there.'—'And do you know Tatyana Ivanovna?'—'Why, of course I do.'—'Permit me to ask if you were also exiled?'—'Yes, I had to suffer that misfortune.'—'And you?'—'We were all sent on the 14th of December. Strange that we don't know you, if you also were among those sent on the 14th. Will you tell us your name?'—'Feodorof.'—'Were you also on the 14th?'—'No, on the 18th.'—'How on the 18th?'—'18th of September; for a gold watch; I was falsely charged with stealing it, and though I was innocent, I had to go.'"

All burst out laughing except the narrator, who with a preternaturally solemn face looked at his hearers each and all, and swore that it was a true story.

Shortly after this tale one of the gilded youths got up and went to his club. After passing through the room furnished with tables, where old men were playing cards; after turning into the "infernalnaya" where already the famous "Puchin" was beginning his game against the "assembled crowd"; after lingering awhile near one of the billiard-tables at which a little old man of distinction was making chance shots; and after glancing into the library where some general was reading sedately over his glasses, holding his newspaper far from his eyes, and where a literary young man, striving not to make a noise, was turning over the files of papers,—the gilded youth sat down on a divan in the billiard-room with another man, who like himself belonged to the same gilded youth, and was playing backgammon.

It was the luncheon day, and there were present many gentlemen who were frequenters of the club. Among the number was Ivan Pavlovitch Pakhtin. He was a man of forty, of medium height, pale complexion, stout, with

wide shoulders and hips, with a bald head, a shiny, jolly, smooth-shaven face. Though he did not play backgammon, he joined Prince D——, with whom he was on intimate terms, and he did not refuse the glass of champagne which was offered to him. He arranged himself so comfortably after his dinner, slightly smoothing the seat of his trousers, that any one would think he had been sitting there a century, smoking his cigar, sipping his champagne, and happily conscious of the nearness of princes and counts and the sons of ministers. The tidings of the return of the Labazofs disturbed his equanimity. "Where are you going, Pakhtin?" asked the son of a minister, who in the interval of his play, noticed that Pakhtin got up, pulled down his waistcoat, and drank his champagne in great swallows.

"Seviernikof invited me," said Pakhtin, feeling a certain unsteadiness in his legs, "say, are you going?"

*Anastasya, Anastasya, otroryai-ka vorota.*

\* This was a gipsy song that was in great vogue at the time.

"Perhaps so. And you?"

"How should I go, an old married man?"

"There now."

Pakhtin, smiling, went to find Seviernikof in the "glass room." He liked to have his last word take the form of a jest. And so it was now.

"Tell me, how is the countess's health?" he asked, as he joined Seviernikof, who did not know him at all, but, as Pakhtin conjectured, would consider it of the greatest importance to know of the Labazofs' return. Seviernikof had been himself somewhat implicated in the affair of December 14, and was a friend of the Dekabrists.

The countess's health was much better, and Pakhtin was very glad of it.

"Did you know that Labazof got back to-day, and is staying at Chevalier's?"

"What is that you say? Why, we are old friends. How glad I am. He has grown old, poor fellow. His wife wrote my wife...."

But Seviernikof did not cite what she wrote. His partner, who was playing without trumps, made some mistake. While talking with Ivan Pavlovitch, he kept his eye on them, but now suddenly he threw his whole body on the table, and, pounding on it with his hands, proved that he ought to have played a seven.

Ivan Pavlovitch got up and went to another table, joined the conversation there, and communicated to another important man his news, again got up and did the same thing at a third table. All these men of distinction were very glad to hear of Labazof's return, so that when Ivan Pavlovitch came back to the billiard-room again he no longer doubted, as he had at first, whether it was the proper thing to be glad of Labazof's return, and no longer employed any periphrasis about the ball, or the article in the *Viestnik*, or any one's health, or the weather, but broke his news at once with an enthusiastic account of the happy return of the famous Dekabrist. The little old man, who was still making vain attempts to hit the white ball with his cue, was, in Pakhtin's opinion, most likely to be rejoiced by the news. He went to him.

"You play remarkably well, your highness," said Pakhtin, just as the little old man struck his cue full in the marker's red waistcoat, signifying by this that he wished it chalked.

The title of address<sup>1</sup> was not spoken at all as you would suppose, with any servility, — oh, no, that would have been impossible in 1856. Ivan Pavlovitch called this old man simply by his given name and patronymic, and the title was given partly as a joke on those who did use it, and partly to let it be known that "we know with whom we are speaking, and yet we like to have a bit of sport and that is a fact;" at any rate, it was very subtle.

"I have just heard that Piotr Labazof has got back. He has arrived to-day from Siberia with his whole family."

Pakhtin uttered these words at the instant that the

<sup>1</sup> *Vashe vuisokoprevashadityelstvo.*

little old man was aiming at his ball again — this was his misfortune.

"If he has come back such a hare-brained fellow as he was when he was sent off, there is nothing to be rejoiced over," said the little old man, gruffly, provoked at his incomprehensible lack of success.

This reply disconcerted Ivan Pavlovitch; once more he did not know whether it was the proper thing to be glad of Labazof's return, and in order definitely to settle his doubts he directed his steps to the room where the men of intellect collected to talk, the men who knew the significance and object of everything, who knew everything, in one word. Ivan Pavlovitch had the same pleasant relations with the *habitués* of the "intellectual room" as he had with the gilded youth and the dignitaries. To tell the truth, he was out of his place in the "intellectual room," but no one was surprised when he entered and sat down on a divan. The talk was turning on the question in what year and on what subject a quarrel had occurred between two Russian journals. Taking advantage of a moment's silence, Ivan Pavlovitch communicated his tidings, not at all as a matter to rejoice over, nor as a matter of little account, but as if it were connected with the conversation. But immediately, by the way the "intellectuals" — I employ this word to signify the *habitués* of the "intellectual room" — received the tidings and began to discuss it; immediately Ivan Pavlovitch understood that here at least this tidings was investigated, and that here only it would take such a form as he could safely carry it further, and "*savoir à quoi s'en tenir*."

"Labazof was the only one left," said one of the "intellectuals." "Now all of the Dekabrists who are alive have returned to Russia."

"He was one of the band of famous ...." said Pakhtin, in a still experimental tone of voice, ready to make this quotation either comic or serious.

"Undoubtedly Labazof was one of the most important men of that time," began one of the "intellectuals." "In 1819 he was ensign of the Semyonovsky regiment

and was sent abroad with despatches for Duke Z—— Then he came back, and in 1824 was admitted to the first Masonic lodge. All the Masons of that time met at D——'s and at his house. You see, he was very rich; Prince Z——, Feodore D——, Ivan P——, those were his most intimate friends. And so his uncle, Prince Visarion, in order to remove the young man from their society, brought him to Moscow."

"Excuse me, Nikolai Stepanovitch," interrupted another of the "intellectuals." "It seems to me that that was in 1823, because Vissarion Labazof was appointed commander of the third Corpus in 1824 and was in Warsaw. He took him on his own staff as aide, and after his dismissal brought him here. However, excuse me, I interrupted you." ....

"Oh, no, you finish the story."

"No, I beg of you."

"No, you finish; you ought to know about it better than I do, and besides, your memory and knowledge have been satisfactorily shown here."

"Well, in Moscow he resigned, contrary to his uncle's wishes," proceeded the one whose "memory and knowledge had been satisfactorily shown." "And here around him formed another society of which he was the head and heart, if one may so express oneself. He was rich, had a good intellect, was cultivated. They say he was remarkably lovable. My aunt used to say that she never knew a man more charming. And here, just before the conspiracy, he married one of the Krinskys." ....

"The daughter of Nikolai Krinsky, the one who before Borodino.... oh, yes, the famous one," interrupted some one.

"Oh, yes. Her enormous property is his now, but his own estate, which he inherited, went to his younger brother, Prince Ivan, who is now Ober-hoff-kafermeister—that is what he called it—and was minister. Best of all was his behavior toward his brother," continued the narrator. "When he was arrested the only thing that he had time to destroy was his brother's letters and papers."

"Was his brother implicated?"

The narrator did not reply "yes," but compressed his lips and closed his eyes significantly.

"Then to all questions Piotr Labazof inflexibly denied everything that would reflect on his brother, and for this reason he was punished more severely than the others. But what is best of all is that Prince Ivan got possession of his whole property, and never sent a grosh to him."

"They say that Piotr Labazof himself renounced it," remarked one of the listeners.

"Yes, but he renounced it simply because Prince Ivan, just before the coronation, wrote him that if he did not take it they would confiscate the property, and that he had children and obligations, and that now he was not in a condition to restore anything. Piotr replied in two lines: 'Neither I nor my heirs have or wish to have any claim to the estate assigned to you by law.' And nothing further. Why should he? And Prince Ivan swallowed it down, and with rapture locked this document and various bonds into his strong-box and showed it to no one." ....

One of the peculiarities of the "intellectual" room consisted in the fact that its *habitués* knew, when they wanted to know, everything that was done in the world, however much of a secret it was.

"Nevertheless it is a question," said a new speaker, "whether it would be fair to take from Prince Ivan's children the property which they have had ever since they were young, and which they supposed they had a right to."

The conversation thus took an abstract turn which did not interest Pakhtin.

He felt the necessity of finding fresh persons to communicate his tidings to, and he got up and made his way leisurely through the rooms, stopping here and there to talk. One of his fellow-members delayed him to tell him the news of the Labazofs' return.

"Who does n't know it?" replied Ivan Pavlovitch, smiling calmly as he started for the front door. The

news had gone entirely round the circle and was coming back to him again. There was nothing left for him to do at the club, so he went to a reception. It was not a formal reception, but a "salon," where every evening callers were received. There were present eight ladies and one old colonel, and all of them were awfully bored. Pakhtin's assurance of bearing and his smiling face had the effect of immediately cheering up the ladies and girls. The tidings was all the more apropos from the fact that there was present the old Countess Fuchs with her daughter. When Pakhtin repeated almost word for word all he had heard in the "intellectual" room, Madame Fuchs, shaking her head and amazed to think how old she was, began to recall how she had once ridden horseback with Natasha Krinsky before she was married to Labazof.

"Her marriage was a very romantic story, and it all took place under my eyes. Natasha was almost engaged to Miatlin, who was afterward killed in a duel with Debro. Just at that time Prince Piotr came to Moscow, fell in love with her, and made her an offer. Only her father, who was very favorably inclined to Miatlin and was especially afraid of Labazof as a Mason — her father refused his consent. But the young man continued to meet her at balls, everywhere, and he made friends with Miatlin, and asked him to withdraw. Miatlin consented. Labazof persuaded her to elope with him. She had already agreed to do so, but repented at the last moment" — the conversation was carried on in French — "she went to her father and told him that all was ready for their elopement, and that she could leave him, but that she hoped for his generosity. And in fact her father forgave her, all took her part, and he gave his consent. And so the wedding took place, and it was a gay wedding! Who of us dreamed that within a year she would follow him to Siberia? She was an only daughter, the richest and handsomest heiress of that time. The Emperor Alexander always paid her attention at balls, and how many times he danced with her. The Countess G. gave a *bal costumé*, if I re-



member rightly; and she went as a Neapolitan girl, wonderfully beautiful. Whenever the Emperor came to Moscow he would ask: *Que fait la belle Napolitaine?* And suddenly this woman, in a delicate condition,—her baby was born on the way,—without a moment's hesitation, without making any preparations, without packing her trunks, just as she was, when they arrested him, followed him for five thousand versts."

"Oh, what a wonderful woman," exclaimed the hostess.

"And both he and she were such uncommon people," said still another woman. "I have been told, but I don't know whether it is true or not, that everywhere in Siberia where they work in the mines, or whatever it is called, the convicts who were with them became better from associating with them."

"Yes; but she never worked in the mines," corrected Pakhtin.

That is what the year '56 was! Three years before no one had a thought for the Labazofs, and if any one remembered them, it was with that inexplicable sense of terror with which one speaks of the recently dead. Now how vividly all their former relations were remembered, all their admirable qualities were brought up, and every lady already began to form plans for securing a monopoly of the Labazofs, and by means of them to attract other guests.

"Their son and daughter have come with them," said Pakhtin.

"If only they are as handsome as their mother was!" said the Countess Fuchs.... however, their father also was very, very handsome."

"How could they educate their children there?" queried the hostess.

"They say they are admirably educated. They say the young man is so handsome, so likeable! and educated as if he had been brought up in Paris."

"I predict a great success for the young lady," said a very handsome girl. "All these Siberian ladies have about them something pleasantly trivial, and every one likes it."

"Yes, that is so," said another girl.

"So we have still another wealthy match," said a third girl.

The old colonel, who was of German extraction, and three years before had come to Moscow to make a rich marriage, decided that it was for his interest, as soon as possible, before the young men found out about this, to get an introduction to her, and offer himself. The girls and ladies had almost precisely the same thought regarding the young man from Siberia.

"This must be and is my fate," thought one girl who for eight years had been vainly launched on society. "It must have been for the best that that stupid cavalier guardsman did not offer himself to me. I should surely have been unhappy.

"Well, they will all grow yellow with jealousy when this young man like the rest falls in love with me," thought a young and beautiful woman.

Whatever is said of the provincialism of small towns, there is nothing worse than the provincialism of high society. There one finds no new faces, but society is ready to take up with any new persons as soon as once they appear; here it is rarely that, as now with the Labazofs, people are acknowledged as belonging to their circle and received, and the sensation produced by these new personages was even stronger than would have been the case in a district city.

### III

"Moscow, oh, Mother Moscow, white-walled city!"<sup>1</sup> exclaimed Piotr Ivanovitch, rubbing his eyes the next morning and listening to the sound of bells that floated above the Gazetnui Pereulok.

Nothing so vividly recalls the past as sounds; and these peals of the Moscow bells, together with the sight of the white wall seen from the window and the rattle of wheels, so vividly recalled to him not only that Mos

<sup>1</sup> *Moskva-to, Moskva-to matushka byelokamennaya.*

cow which he had known thirty-five years before, but also that Moscow with its Kreml, its roofs, its Ivans, and the rest which he had borne in his heart, that he felt a childish delight in the fact that he was a Russian and that he was in Moscow.

There appeared a Bukhara khalat, flung open over a broad chest in a chintz shirt, a pipe with an amber mouth-piece, a lackey with gentle manners, tea, the scent of tobacco; a loud impetuous voice of a man was heard in Chevalier's rooms; morning kisses were exchanged, and the voices of daughter and son intermingled, and the Dekabrist was just as much at home as in Irkutsk or as he would have been in New York or Paris.

As I should not wish to present to my readers my Dekabrist hero as above all weaknesses, it must be confessed in the interests of truth that Piotr Ivanovitch shaved himself with the greatest care, combed his hair, and looked into the mirror. He was dissatisfied with his coat, which had been none too well mended in Siberia, and twice he unbuttoned and buttoned up his waistcoat.

Natalya Nikolayevna came into the drawing-room with her black moire gown rustling, with such sleeves and laces on her cap, that, although it was entirely out of the prevalent fashion, still it was so devised that it not only was not *ridicule* but on the contrary *distingué*. But in case of ladies this is a peculiar sixth sense, and sagacity is not to be compared with it.

Sonya was likewise so constituted that, although everything she wore was at least two years behind the style, still one could find no fault with it. The mother wore what was dark and simple; the daughter what was light and gay.

Serozha had only just woke up, and the ladies went without him to mass. The father and the mother sat behind, the daughter in front. Vasili sat on the box, and an izvoshchik's cab carried them to the Kreml. When they entered, the ladies adjusted their gowns, and Piotr Ivanovitch took Natalya Nikolayevna on his arm, and, hanging his head, entered the doors of the cathedral. Few — either merchants, or officers, or the common

people — could have known who these strangers were. Who was that deeply sunburnt and decrepit old man with the straight and circling wrinkles, indicative of a laborious life — wrinkles of a kind never met with at the English club — with his hair and beard white as snow, with his proud yet kindly glance and his energetic movements? Who was that tall lady with her air of distinction and her large beautiful eyes, so weary and so dim? Who was that strong, fresh, well-proportioned girl, dressed so unfashionably, and yet so self-assured? Of the merchant class or not of the merchant class? Germans or not Germans? People of rank? Apparently not, and yet evidently people of distinction.

Thus thought those that saw them in the church, and consequently they all even more willingly made haste to step aside and to let them pass than if they were men with heavy epaulets.

Piotr Ivanovitch held himself as majestically as at his entrance, and said his prayers with dignity and solemnity, not forgetting himself.

Natalya Nikolayevna knelt lightly, taking out her handkerchief, and she wept many tears during the time of the Kheruvimskaya song. Sonya evidently seemed to be making an effort to control herself so as to say her prayers. The service did not appeal to her, but she did not look round; she crossed herself assiduously.

Serozha stayed at home partly because he slept over, partly because he did not like to stand during the service; it made his feet swell, and he never could understand why it was that to travel on snow-shoes forty versts did not trouble him in the least, while to stand during the twelve Gospels caused him the greatest physical pain; but his chief excuse was that he needed new clothes.

He dressed and went to the Kuznetsky Most. He had plenty of money. His father had made it a rule ever since his son was twenty-one years old, to give him as much money as he wanted. It was in his power to leave his father and mother absolutely penniless.

What a pity about the two hundred and fifty silver

rubles which he wasted in Kuntz's ready-made clothing establishment! Any one of the gentlemen who passed Serozha on the street would have gladly taught him, and would have considered it a pleasure to go with him to show him what to get; but, as usually happens, he was alone in the throng, and he went along the Kuznetsky Most in his cap, opened the door, and emerged from there in a cinnamon-colored semi-dress-coat, cut narrow, — they were worn wide, — in black trousers, cut wide, — they were worn narrow, — and in a flowered satin waist coat which not one of the gentlemen who frequented the special room at Chevalier's would have permitted himself to bestow on his lackey; and these things Serozha bought largely because Kuntz was in perplexity about the young man's slender figure, and, as he was in the habit of saying to all his customers, he declared that he had never seen the like before.

Serozha knew that he had a good figure, but the praise of a stranger like Kuntz greatly flattered him. He went out minus his two hundred and fifty rubles; and yet he was very badly dressed, so badly in fact that his new clothes within two days went into the possession of Vasili, and this episode always remained an unpleasant recollection for Serozha. When he reached the hotel again he went down-stairs and took his seat in the large room, also looking into the Chevalier's private room, and he called for such strange dishes for his breakfast that the *garçon* when he went into the kitchen had to laugh. But nevertheless he asked for a newspaper and pretended to read it. When the *garçon*, presuming on the youth's inexperience, began to ask him questions, Serozha bade him go to his place and his face grew red. But he spoke so haughtily that the man obeyed him. His mother, his father, and sister when they returned home found likewise that his new clothes were admirable.

Do you remember that delightful feeling of childhood when on your name-day you were dressed up in your best, and were taken to mass, and then, returning home with the festival in your clothes, in your face, and in your soul, you found guests and toys waiting for you?

You knew that on that day you had no lessons, that your elders also rejoiced with you, that for the entire house that day was exceptional and joyous; you knew that you alone were the sole cause of this enthusiasm, and that whatever you did, it would be forgiven you; and it seemed strange that people in the street were not also rejoicing with you, just as your friends were, and everything sounded louder and the lights were brighter; in a word, it was the festival feeling. Such a feeling did Piotr Ivanovitch experience on returning from church.

Pakhtin's evening labors had not been in vain; instead of toys Piotr Ivanovitch, when he reached his rooms, found a number of visiting cards of influential Muscovites who in '56 counted it their bounden duty to show the distinguished exile all possible attention, although three years before they would not have cared to see him. In the eyes of Chevalier, the Swiss, and the people of the hotel, the arrival of so many carriages with inquiries for Piotr Ivanovitch in one single morning multiplied their respect and obsequiousness tenfold. All this stood for the name-day gifts for Piotr Ivanovitch. However experienced in life a man may be, wise as he may be, the manifestation of respect from men who are themselves respected by the great majority of men is always pleasant. Piotr Ivanovitch felt gay at heart when Chevalier, bowing, proposed to him to change his rooms for better ones, and begged him to make known whatever he would like done for his comfort, and assured him that he counted it an honor to have him a guest at his hotel; and, so it was when, glancing over the cards and again throwing them into the card-receiver, he mentioned the names of Count S—, Prince D—, and the like. Natalya Nikolayevna declared that she would receive no one, but would go immediately to Marya Ivanovna's, and to this Piotr Ivanovitch agreed, although he would have been glad to talk with many of the visitors.

Only one of the visitors succeeded in forcing the countersign. This was Pakhtin. If this man had been asked why he had come from Pretchistenka to the Ga

zetnui Pereulok, he would not have been able to give any satisfactory excuse, except that he liked anything which was new and interesting, and so he had come to look at Piotr Ivanovitch as at a curiosity. It might be thought that he would have felt a little hesitation at intruding with such an excuse on a perfect stranger to him. But it was quite the contrary. Piotr Ivanovitch and his son and Sofya Petrovna were dumfounded. Natalya Nikolayevna was too much of a *grande dame* to be confused at any such thing. A weary look from her beautiful black eyes rested calmly on Pakhtin. Pakhtin was fresh, self-satisfied, and very genial, as usual. He and Marya Ivanovna were friends.

"Ah!" said Natalya Nikolayevna.

"Well, not exactly friends — our years, you know, but she has always been very kind to me."

Pakhtin had been long a worshiper of Piotr Ivanovitch; he knew his companions. He hoped he might be useful to the newcomers. He had intended to have come the evening before; but had not been able to manage it, and he begged them to excuse him, and so he sat down and talked for a long time.

"Yes, I will tell you that I have found many changes in Russia since I went away," said Piotr Ivanovitch, in reply to a question. As soon as Piotr Ivanovitch began to speak it was worth while to notice with what respectful attention Pakhtin listened to every word which fell from the old man's lips, and how, at every phrase or word, Pakhtin, by a nod, a smile, or a motion of the eyes, let it be understood that he was listening, and taking in all the force of words and phrases so memorable. The weary eyes approved this manœuvre. Sergyer Petrovitch, it seemed, was afraid that his father's talk would not be worth the hearer's attention. Sofya Petrovna, on the contrary, smiled with that slight smile of satisfaction characteristic of people who detect the ridiculous side of a man. It seemed to her that nothing was to be expected from this man, that he was a "softy"<sup>1</sup> as she and her brother called a certain kind of man.

<sup>1</sup> *Shiushka*.

Piotr Ivanovitch explained that during his journey he had remarked many great changes which pleased him.

"Beyond doubt the people—the peasantry—are greatly improved; there has come to be greater recognition in them of their dignity," said he, as if repeating an old phrase.

"And I must say, that the people interest me, and always have interested me, more than anything else. I firmly believe that the strength of Russia is not in us, but in the common people."

Piotr Ivanovitch, with a warmth characteristic of him, communicated his more or less original ideas concerning a number of important subjects. We shall have to hear them more at length. Pakhtin was enraptured, and expressed his perfect agreement with everything:—

"You will surely have to make the acquaintance of the Aksatofs; you will allow me to present them to you, prince? You know his new journal is now to be permitted; the first number will be out to-morrow. I have read his wonderful article on the orderliness of the theory of science in the abstract. Thoroughly interesting. There is still another article of his—the history of Serbia in the eleventh century, of that famous voyevode Karbovanietz; also very interesting. On the whole it is a great stride in advance."

"Oh, yes," said Piotr Ivanovitch. But all this news evidently did not interest him; he did not even know the names and services of these men whom Pakhtin spoke about as if they were universally known. Natalya Nikolayevna, however, not scorning the necessity of knowing all these men and conditions, remarked in her husband's exculpation that Pierre received the journals very late, but he read them very assiduously.

"Papa, are we going to auntie's?" asked Sonya, coming in.

"Yes, but we must have luncheon first. Would n't you like something?"

Pakhtin, of course, refused; but Piotr Ivanovitch, with hospitality peculiarly Russian, and characteristic of himself, insisted on Pakhtin's having something to eat



and drink. He himself drank a small glass of vodka and a cup of Bordeaux. Pakhtin noticed that, when he drank the wine, Natalya Nikolayevna unexpectedly turned away from the glass, and the son looked at his father's hand. After the wine, Piotr Ivanovitch replied to Pakhtin's questions as to what he thought about the new literature, the new tendencies, about the war, about the peace. Pakhtin knew how to unite the most divergent topics into one disconnected but fluent conversation.

To these questions Piotr Ivanovitch immediately launched into a general *profession de foi*, and either the wine, or the topic of conversation, caused him to grow so excited that tears stood in his eyes, and Pakhtin grew enthusiastic and even wept; he did not hesitate to express his conviction that Piotr Ivanovitch was far ahead of the most advanced liberals, and that he ought to be the leader of all parties. Piotr Ivanovitch's eyes flashed; he had faith in all Pakhtin said to him, and he would have continued the conversation much longer if Sofya Petrovna had not conspired with Natalya Nikolayevna to put on her mantilla, and had not herself come in to get Piotr Ivanovitch.

He was going to drink up the rest of his wine, but Sofya Petrovna took it herself.

"What do you mean?"

"I have n't had any yet, papa. Excuse me."

He smiled.

"Well, we must go to Marya Ivanovna's. You pardon us, Mr. Pakhtin."

And Piotr Ivanovitch went out, carrying his head high. In the vestibule he fell in with a general who had come to pay his respects to his old friend. They had not met for thirty-five years. The general had no teeth and was bald.

"Why, how fresh you are," said he, "Siberia must be better than Petersburg. Are these your family? Pray present me! What a fine young man your son is. Then you will dine with us to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, certainly."

On the doorstep they met the famous Chikhayef, also an old acquaintance.

"How did you know that I had come?"

"It would be a shame for Moscow, if it was not known; it was a shame that you were not met at the barriers. If you are going out to dine, it must be at your sister's, Marya Ivanovna's. Well, that is excellent; I shall be there also."

Piotr Ivanovitch always had the look of a proud man for those who could not penetrate that exterior and read his expression of unspeakable goodness and susceptibility; but now Natalya Nikolayevna admired him for his unusual majesty, and Sofya Petrovna's eyes smiled as she looked at him.

They reached Marya Ivanovna's.

Marya Ivanova was Piotr Ivanovitch's godmother and was ten years his senior. She was an old maid.

Her story and how she failed to secure a husband, and how she lived in her youth, I shall tell in some other place.

She had lived uninterruptedly in Moscow. She had neither great intellect nor great wealth, and she did not value her relatives, on the contrary; but there was not a man who would not value her friendship. She was so convinced that all ought to value her, that all did value her. There were young liberals from the university who did not acknowledge her power, but these gentlemen conspired only in her absence. All it required was for her to walk with her imperial gait into the drawing-room, to speak in her calm manner, to smile her caressing smile, and they were subjected. Her circle included every one. She looked on Moscow and treated it as her own household. Her special friends consisted of young people and intellectual men; women she did not like. She had also those sycophants, male and female, whom, for some reason or other, our literature has included in the general scorn it lavishes on the Hungarian cloak and on generals. But Marya Ivanovna considered that it was better for the ruined gambler Skopin and the "grass widow" Byesheva to live with her than in poverty, and so she supported them.

There were two powerful feelings in Marya Ivanovna's present existence; they were her two brothers. Piotr Ivanovitch was her idol. Prince Ivan was her detestation. She did not know that Piotr Ivanovitch had come, she had been at mass, and was at the present moment drinking her coffee. The vicar of Moscow, Byesheva, and Skopin were sitting at the table. Marya Ivanovna was telling them of the young Count V——, the son of Count P. Z——, who had just returned from Sevastopol and with whom she was in love—for she was always having passions. He was to dine with her that day.

The vicar got up and took his leave. Marya Ivanovna did not attempt to detain him. She was a latitudinarian in this respect; she was pious, but she did not like monks. She made sport of girls who ran after them, and she said boldly that, in her opinion, monks were the same kind of people as we poor sinners, and that salvation was to be obtained in the world better than in monasteries.

"Give out word that I am not receiving," said she. "I am going to write to Pierre; I don't understand why he has not come yet. Probably Natalya Nikolayevna is ill."

Marya Ivanovna was convinced that Natalya Nikolayevna did not like her, and was her enemy. She could never forgive her because it was Natalya Nikolayevna, and not she, his sister, who gave him her property and went with him to Siberia, and because her brother had definitely refused to accept this sacrifice when she had got ready to go with him. After thirty-five years she was beginning to believe her brother in his assertion that Natalya Nikolayevna was the best woman in the world, and his guardian angel; but she was jealous of her, and she kept imagining that she was a wicked woman.

She got up, went through the "hall," and was starting for her library when the door opened, and the gray-haired Byesheva's wrinkled face, expressing a joyous terror, appeared in the doorway.

"Marya Ivanovna, prepare your mind," said she.

"A letter?"

"No, something more important."

But, before she had a chance to finish her sentence, a man's loud voice was heard in the vestibule.

"Where is she? You go on, Natasha."

"It is he!" exclaimed Marya Ivanovna, and with long, firm steps she went to her brother. She met him as if she had parted with him only the day before.

"When did you arrive? Where are you staying? How did you come — by carriage?" Such questions as this did Marya Ivanovna put, as she went with him into the drawing-room; nor did she wait or listen to his replies, but kept looking, with wide-open eyes, now at one, now at another of them. Byesheva was amazed at such calmness, or indifference rather, and did not approve of it. They all smiled; the conversation languished. Marya Ivanovna relapsed into silence, and kept looking at her brother gravely.

"How are you?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch, taking her hand, and smiling.

Piotr Ivanovitch addressed his sister with the plural pronoun "vui," and she used the singular "tui." Marya Ivanovna looked once more at the gray beard and the bald head, at his teeth, at the wrinkles around his eyes, at his sunburned face, and she knew it all.

"Here is my Sonya."

But she did not look at her.

"What a foo ...."

Her voice broke; she seized her brother's bald head with both her big white hands. "What a fool you were," she was going to say, "that you did not give me warning," but her bosom and shoulders shook, her face grew convulsed, and she began to sob, while still pressing the bald head to her bosom, and repeating:—

"What a fool you were not to give me notice."

Piotr Ivanovitch no longer seemed to himself such a great man, or so important, as he had seemed to be when he stood on the doorsteps of the Hôtel Chevalier. He was seated in an arm-chair, but his head was in his sister's arms, and his nose was squeezed against her corset, and something tickled his nose, and his hair was tumbled, and tears were in his eyes. But still he liked it.

When this ebullition of happy tears had passed, Marya Ivanovna realized and believed in the reality of what had happened, and began to study them all. But several times again, during the course of that day, when it came over her what he had once been, and what she had once been, and what they were now, and when her imagination vividly pictured their past unhappiness, and their former happiness and their former love, she would again spring up, and say:—

“What a fool you were, Petrushka; what a fool not to give me warning. Why did you not come directly to me? I would have taken you in,” said Marya Ivanovna. “At any rate, you will dine with me. It won’t be a bore to you, Sergyer, for a young hero from Sevastopol is coming. But don’t you know the son of Nikolaï Mikhailovitch? He is a writer who has already written something. I have not read it yet, but it is praised, and he is a fine young fellow. I will have him invited. Chikhayef also wanted to come. Well, he is a chatter-box. I don’t like him. He’s been to see you already. And have you seen Nikita? Now all that is rubbish. What do you intend to do? And how is your health, Natalie? Where did you get this handsome lad and lassie?”

But the conversation kept flagging.

Before dinner Natalya Nikolayevna and the children went to see the old aunt. The brother and sister were left alone together, and he began to unfold his plans.

“Sonya is grown up; we shall have to bring her out; of course we shall live in Moscow,” said Marya Ivanovna.

“Not for the world.”

“Serozha will have to go into the service.”

“Not for the world.”

“You are as crazy as ever.”

Nevertheless, she had a great fondness for the “crazy” one.

“We shall have to settle down here, then go into the country and show the children everything.”

“My rule is not to interfere in family affairs,” said

Marya Ivanovna, who was now growing calm after her excitement, "and I never give advice. But that a young man should go into the service I have always thought, and think so still, but now more than ever. You have no idea, Petrusha, what young men are nowadays. I know them all; here is Prince Dmitri's son,—he has entirely failed. Yes, and what is more, they are to blame for it. You see, I am not afraid of any one; I am an old woman, and it is not well."

And she began to talk about the government. She was dissatisfied with the excessive freedom granted to every one.

"They have done one good thing,—they let you come home. That is good."

Petrusha began to speak in the government's defense, but Marya Ivanovna was of a different nature from Pakhtin's. She would not argue with him; she instantly grew heated.

"Now, here you are defending it? Why do you defend it? I see you are just the same, just as unreasonable as ever."

Piotr Ivanovitch held his peace, but smiled faintly, showing that he was not convinced, but that he did not wish to quarrel with Marya Ivanovna.

"You smile. We know what that means. You don't want to discuss with me, with an old woman," said she, gayly and soothingly, and looking at her brother more keenly, more cleverly, than one would have expected from an old woman with such strong features. "Yes, you'd better not discuss, little friend. You see, I have lived seventy years. And I have not lived to be a fool, either; but I have seen some things and learned some things; I have not read your books, and I don't intend to read them, either. What rubbish there is in books."

"Now tell me how my children please you," said Piotr Ivanovitch, with the same smile.

"Well, well, now," said his sister, threatening him, "don't get on to the subject of your children yet; we will talk about that by and by. But here is something I want to tell you. You are such an unpractical man.

I can see it by your eyes you are just what you always have been. And now they will make much of you. That is the fashion now; you are all in the style. Yes, yes, I see it in your eyes that you are just the same impracticable fellow that you always were," she added, replying to his smile. "You had better keep in the background. I pray to Christ our God to keep you from all these modern liberals. God knows what they are up to. This thing is sure; it will end badly. Our government is keeping quiet now, but by and by it will show its claws; mark my word, I am afraid you will get entangled again. Give it up, it's all folly; you have children."

"You see you don't know me now, Marya Ivanovna," said her brother.

"Very good, but we shall see. Either I don't know you, or you don't know yourself. I have only said what was in my mind, and if you heed me, well and good. But now let us talk about Serozha. What do you think about him?" — She was going to say, "He does not please me very much;" but she said — "He resembles his mother; they are as alike as two drops of water. Now there is your Sonya. She pleases me very much; there is something very sweet and frank about her. Very pretty. Where is she, where is Sonyushka? Yes, I had forgotten about her."

"What can I say? Sonya will make a good wife and a good mother, but Serozha is clever, very clever, no one can deny that. He is an excellent scholar, though he is rather lazy. He has a great aptitude for the natural sciences. We were very fortunate; we had a splendid, splendid tutor for him. He wants to enter the university; to have lectures on the natural sciences, chemistry ...."

"If you only knew, Petrusha, how I pity them," said she, in a tone of genuine, softened, and even submissive melancholy. "So sorry, so sorry! Their whole life before them. What won't they have to endure!"

"Well, we must hope that they will be more fortunate than we were."

"God grant it, God grant it! Oh, life is hard, Pe

trusha! Now listen to me in one thing. Don't go into subtleties, my dear. What a fool you are, Petrusha, oh, what a fool! However, I made some arrangements. I have invited some people, and what shall I give them to eat?"

She gave a little sob, turned round, and rang the bell.  
"Call Taras."

"Is the old man still with you?" asked her brother.

"Yes, he is still here. But you'll see he is only a boy in comparison with me."

Taras was surly and blunt, but he undertook to do everything.

Shortly after, elated with the cold and their joy, came in Natalya Nikolayevna and Sonya, their gowns rustling. Serozha had remained to make some more purchases.

"Let me look at her."

Marya Ivanovna clasped her face between her two hands.

Natalya Nikolayevna told what she had been doing.

## SECOND FRAGMENT

(Variant of the First Chapter)

THE lawsuit brought by the proprietor, Ivan Apuikh-tin, retired lieutenant of the guard, for the possession of four thousand desyatins of land occupied by his neighbors, the crown-peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi, in the district of Krasnoslobodsky, government of Penza, had been decided at the first trial, by the District Court, in favor of the peasants, through the clever pleading of Ivan Mironof their advocate, and an enormous *datcha*, or parcel, of land, part forest, and part cultivated, cleared by Apuikh-tin's serfs, fell into the hands of the peasants in 1815; and in 1816 the peasants sowed this land and harvested the crops. The profit of this irregular action of the peasants surprised all the neighborhood and the peasants themselves.



This success of the peasants was explained solely by the fact that Ivan Petrovitch Apuikhtin, a man of very sweet and peaceable nature, and no lover of lawsuits, though he was convinced of his rights in the matter, had taken no measures against the peasants. Ivan Mironof, however, a peasant who had studied law, a dry, hawk-nosed, educated muzhik, who had been *golova*, or head man, and had been about as collector of taxes, made an assessment of fifty kopeks apiece from each of the men, and spent this money to the best advantage in bribes, and cleverly conducted the whole affair to a successful issue.

But shortly after the decision of the District Court, Apuikhtin, seeing his danger, gave a power of attorney to a skilful lawyer, Ilya Mitrofanof, who appealed the case to the higher court against the decision of the District Court. Ilya Mitrofanof conducted the affair so cleverly that, in spite of the efforts of Ivan Mironof, the peasants' advocate, notwithstanding all the considerable gifts of money presented by him to the members of the tribunal, the decision of the District was reversed in favor of the proprietor, and the land once more had to be given up by the peasants. and their advocate had to make the announcement to them. Their advocate, Ivan Mironof, explained to the assembled peasants, that the gentlemen of the government had "lengthened the proprietor's arm and spoiled the affair entirely," so they were going to take away the land from them again; but that the proprietor's business would fall through because his petition had already been written to the senate, and there was a man there who had faithfully promised to do the right thing in the senate, and that then the land would be forever granted to the peasants: all that was wanted was a fresh assessment of a ruble apiece from every soul among them. The peasants voted to collect the money, and once more they intrusted the whole affair to Ivan Mironof. Having got the money, Mironof went to Petersburg.

When the season for plowing opened in Holy Week, 1817—it came late that year—the peasants of Izlego

shchi met in an assembly and began to discuss whether they should cultivate the disputed land that year; and notwithstanding the fact that Apuikhtin's manager had come during Lent with an order to them not to plow his land, and to render account of the rye that they had harvested the year before, nevertheless the peasants, for the very reason that they had already sowed their winter crop on the disputed land, and because Apuikhtin, not wishing to be too hard on them, was trying to give them a fair chance, decided to cultivate the disputed land, and to take hold of it before they did anything else. On the very day the peasants went to plow the Berestof datcha, on Maundy Thursday, Ivan Petrovitch Apuikhtin, who had been fasting during Holy Week, partook of the communion and went early in the morning to the church in the village of Izlegoshchi, of which he was a parishioner, and there, being unwitting of the peasants' action, attended mass amiably with the church elder.

Ivan Petrovitch made confession in the afternoon and had the vespers performed at his house; in the morning he himself read the precepts, and at eight o'clock he left his house. They were expecting him at mass. As he stood at the altar where he usually stood, Ivan Petrovitch reasoned rather than prayed; and so he was dissatisfied with himself. He, like many men of his time, indeed of all times, felt that his attitude toward the faith was not clear. He was now fifty years old, he had never neglected the Church ritual, he went to church regularly and fasted once a year; in talking with his only daughter he had tried to ground her in the fundamentals of the true faith: but if any one had asked him exactly what he himself believed, he would have found it hard to decide what answer to give. Especially on this particular day he felt his heart melt within him, and, as he stood by the altar, instead of saying the prayers, he kept thinking how strangely everything was arranged in this world: here he was, almost an old man, who had fasted perhaps forty times in his life, and he knew that all his domestics and all in the church regarded him as a model, took him as an ex

ample, and he felt himself bound to set this example in relation to religion; but here he did not know anything, and before long it would be time for him to die, and for the life of him he could not tell whether what he was giving his people as an example was true or not. And it was strange to him how all—as he could see—took it for granted that old people were firm in the faith and knew what was necessary and what was not necessary—so he had always thought of old people; and here he was an old man, and yet he really did not know and was just as uncertain as he had been when he was twenty; hitherto he had disguised this fact, but now he acknowledged it.

Just as when he was a child the thought had sometimes occurred to him during service to crow like a cock, so now all sorts of ridiculous notions went through his brain; but here he was, an old man, reverently bowing, resting the aged bones of his hand on the flagging of the floor, and here was Father Vasili showing evident signs of timidity in performing the service before him, and “thus by our zeal we encourage his!”

“But if they only knew what notions were flying through my head. But it is sin, it is sin, I must conquer it by prayer,” said he to himself as the service began; and as he listened to the significance of the Ektenia,<sup>1</sup> he tried to pray, and in fact his emotions speedily carried him over into the spirit of prayer, and he began to realize his sins, and all that he had confessed.

A pleasant old man, walking evenly in bark shoes which had lost their shape, with a bald spot in the midst of his thick gray hair, wearing a shuba with a patch half way down the back, came up to the altar, bowed to the ground, shook back his hair, and went behind the altar to place the candles.

This was the church *starosta*, or elder, Ivan Feodotof, one of the best muzhiks of the village of Izlegoshchi. Ivan Petrovitch knew him. The sight of this grave, firm face led Ivan Petrovitch into a new trend of thought. He was one of the muzhiks that wanted to

<sup>1</sup> Liturgy in behalf of the Emperor and his family.

get his land away from him, and one of the best and richest of the married farmers who needed land, who knew how to till it, and with good reason.

His grave face, his reverent obeisance, his dignified walk, the neatness of his attire, — his leg-wrappers clung round his calves like stockings, and the fastenings were symmetrically crossed so that they were the same on both, — his whole appearance, seemed to express reproach and animosity to all that was of the earth.

"Now I have asked forgiveness of my wife and of my daughter Mani, and of my servant Volodya, and now I must ask also this man's forgiveness and forgive him," said Ivan Petrovitch, and he determined to go and ask forgiveness of Ivan Feodotof after the service.

And so he did.

There were few people in the church. The majority made their devotions in the first or the fourth week of Lent. So that now there were only about forty men and women who had not been able to attend the services earlier, besides a few old men — devoted church attendants from among Apuikhtin's house servants and those of his rich neighbors, the Chernuishefs. There were among them an old lady, a relative of the Chernuishefs, who lived with them, and the widow of a sacristan, whose son the Chernuishefs, out of sheer kindness, had educated and made a man of, and who was now serving as a functionary in the senate.

Between matins and mass comparatively few remained in the church. The peasant men and women stayed outside. There remained two beggar women, sitting in one corner, whispering together and occasionally glancing at Ivan Petrovitch with an evident desire to wish his health and talk with him, and two lackeys, his own lackey, in livery, and the Chernuishefs', who had come with the old lady. These two were also whispering together with great animation when Ivan Petrovitch came out from behind the altar, and as soon as they saw him they stopped talking.

There was still another woman in the high head-dress decorated with glass beads, and a white shuba, which she wrapped round a sick infant, trying to keep it from screaming. Then there was still another, a hunch-backed old woman also in a peasant head-dress, but decorated with woolen tags, and in a white kerchief tied in old woman's fashion, and wearing a gray *chuprun*, or sack, with cocks embroidered down the back, and she knelt in the middle of the church, bowing toward an ancient image which was placed between the grated windows, and covered with a new towel with red ends, and she prayed so fervently, solemnly, and passionately, that it was impossible to avoid noticing her.

Before going to speak to the church elder, who was standing at the closet, kneading the candle-ends into a ball of wax, Ivan Petrovitch paused to glance at this old woman praying. She prayed very fluently. She knelt as straight as one could when addressing an image; all of her limbs were composed with mathematical symmetry, the toes of her bark shoes touched the stone flagging in exactly the same spot, her body was bent back as far as the hump on her back permitted, her arms were folded with absolute regularity across her stomach, her head was thrown back, and her wrinkled face, with an expression of modest entreaty, with dim eyes was turning directly toward the towel-covered ikon. After she had remained motionless in such a position for a minute or less, but still a definitely determined time, she drew a long sigh, and, withdrawing her right hand, with a wide swing she raised it higher than her head-dress, touched the crown of her head with her closed fingers, and thus widely made the sign of the cross on her abdomen and on her shoulders, and then bringing it back again she bowed her head down to her hands, spread according to rule on the ground, and once more she lifted herself and once more repeated the whole operation.

"There is true prayer," said Ivan Petrovitch to himself, as he looked at her; "not such as us sinners offer; here is faith, though I know that she addresses her image or her towel or the jewels on the image, as they

all do. But it is all right. Why not? Each person has his own creed," said he to himself; "she prays to an image, and here I consider it necessary to beg pardon of a muzhik!"

And he started to find the starosta, involuntarily looking about the church to see if any one was watching his proposed action, which was both pleasing and humiliating to him. It was disagreeable to him to have the old women — beggars, he called them, — see him, but most disagreeable of all was it to have Mishka, his lackey, see him; in Mishka's presence — he knew his keen, shrewd wit — he felt that he had not the power to seek Ivan Feodotof. And he beckoned Mishka to come to him.

"What do you wish?"

"Please go, brother, and get me the rug from the calash, it is so damp here for one's legs."

"I will do so."

And as soon as Mishka had left the church, Ivan Petrovitch immediately went to Ivan Feodotof.

Ivan Feodotof was abashed, just as if he had been detected in some misdemeanor, as soon as his barin drew near. His bashfulness and nervous movements made a strange contrast with his grave face and his curly steel-gray hair and beard. "Do you wish a ten-kopek candle," he asked, lifting the cover of his desk, and only occasionally raising his large handsome eyes to his barin.

"No, I need no candle. Ivan, I ask you to pardon me for Christ's sake, if I have in any way offended you. .... Pardon me, for Christ's sake," he repeated, bowing low.

Ivan Feodotof was wholly dumfounded, and at a loss what to say, but at last he said, with a gentle smirk, collecting his wits:—

"God pardons. As far as I know I have nothing to complain of from you. God pardons, there is no offense," he hastily repeated.

"Still ...."

"God pardons, Ivan Petrovitch. Then you will have two ten-kopek candles?"

“Yes, two.”

“He’s an angel, just an angel; he begs pardon of a mean peasant. O Lord, he is truly an angel!” exclaimed the deacon’s wife, who wore an old black capote and a black kerchief. “And just what we ought to expect.”

“Ah, Paramonovna,” exclaimed Ivan Petrovitch, turning to her. “Are you preparing for the sacrament? I ask your pardon also, for Christ’s sake.”

“God pardons, oh, you angel,<sup>1</sup> my kind benefactor, let me kiss your hand.”

“There, that will do, that will do! You know I don’t like that sort of thing,” said Ivan Petrovitch, smiling, and he went to the altar.

The mass, as it was ordinarily performed in the Izlegoshchi parish, was of short duration, the more so because there were few participants. When the “holy gates” were opened after “Our Father” had been said, Ivan Petrovitch glanced at the northern door to summon Mishka to take his shuba. When the priest noticed this movement, he sternly beckoned to the deacon; the deacon almost ran and summoned the lackey Mikhaïl. Ivan Petrovitch was in a self-satisfied and happy frame of mind, but this obsequiousness and the expression of deference shown by the priest who was officiating at mass, again distracted him, his thin, curved, smooth-shaven lips grew still more curved, and a flash of satire came into his kindly eyes.

“It is just as if I were his general,” said he to himself, and he instantly remembered the words spoken by his German tutor, whom he once took with him to the altar to witness the Russian service; how this German had amused him and angered his wife by saying:—

“*Der Pop war ganz böse, dass ich ihm Alles nachgesehen hatte.*”<sup>2</sup> It also occurred to him how a young Turk had once declared that there was no God, because he had nothing more to eat.

<sup>1</sup> *Batyushka, angel tui moï.*

<sup>2</sup> The priest was very angry, because I kept watching him all the time.

"And here I am taking the communion," he said to himself, and, frowning, he performed the reverences.

And, taking off his bearskin shuba, and remaining only in a blue coat with bright buttons and a high white cravat and waistcoat and close-fitting trousers in heelless boots with pointed toes, he went in his quiet, unobtrusive, and easy gait to bow before the images of the church. And again even here he met with the same complaisance on the part of the participants, who made room for him.

"They seem to be saying, *apres vous s'il en reste*," he remarked to himself, as he made his obeisances to the very ground, with an awkwardness which arose from the fact that he had to find the mean between what might be irreverence and hypocrisy. At last the doors opened. He followed the priest in the reading of the prayer repeating the *yako razboïnika*,<sup>1</sup> they covered his cravat with the sacred veil, and he partook of the sacrament, and of the tepid water in the ancient vessel, and placed his coins in the ancient plates. He listened to the last prayers, bowed low toward the cross, and, putting on his shuba, left the church acknowledging the salutations and experiencing a pleasant sensation of a good work accomplished. As he left the church he again fell in with Ivan Feodotovitch.

"Thank you, thank you," said he, in reply to his salutation. "Tell me, are you going to plow soon?"

"The boys have begun, the boys have begun," replied Ivan Feodotovitch, even more timidly than usual. He supposed that Ivan Petrovitch already knew where the men of Izlegoshchi had gone to plow. "Well, it has been wet, been wet. It is yet early, as yet it is early."

Ivan Petrovitch went to the memorial of his father and mother, bowed low, and then took his seat in his calash drawn by six horses with outrider.

"Well, thank the Lord," said he to himself, as he swayed gently on the soft easy springs, and gazed up at the spring sky with scattered clouds, and at the bare ground, and at the white spots of still unmelted snow, and at the closely twisted tail of the off horse, and

<sup>1</sup> "Like a malefactor."



breathed in the joyous, fresh spring air which was especially pleasant after the atmosphere of the church.

"Thank God that I have partaken of the communion, and thank God that I can take a little snuff."

And he took out his snuff-box and long held the tobacco between his thumb and finger, and with the same hand, not applying the snuff, he raised his hat in reply to the low bows of the people whom he met, especially the women scrubbing their chairs and benches in front of their doorsteps, as the calash with a swift dash of the spanking horses went splashing and dashing through the muddy street of the village of Izlegoshchi.

Ivan Petrovitch, anticipating the pleasant sensation of the tobacco, held the snuff between his thumb and finger all the way through the village, even till after they had got beyond the bad place at the foot of the hill, up which the coachman evidently could not drive without difficulty; he gathered up the reins, settled himself better in his seat, and shouted to the outrider to keep to the ice. When they had passed beyond the bridge and had got out of the broken ice and mud, Ivan Petrovitch, looking at two lapwings rising above the ravine, took his snuff, and, feeling that it was rather cool, he put on his gloves, wrapped himself up, sunk his chin into his high cravat, and said to himself, almost aloud, the word "*slavno*," glorious, which was his favorite expression whenever everything seemed good to him.

During the night the snow had fallen, and even when Ivan Petrovitch was going to church the snow had not wholly melted, but was soft; but now, although there was no sun, the snow was almost liquid, and along the highway, by which he had to drive for three versts before he reached the side road to Chirakovo, there were only gleams of snow on the last year's grass growing between the ruts. The horses trampled through the viscous mud on the black road. But for the fat, well-fed horses of his team it was no effort to draw the calash, and it seemed to go of itself, not only over the grass where the black tracks were left, but also through the mud itself.

"Ivan Petrovitch gave himself up to pleasant thoughts; he thought about his home, his wife, and his daughter.

"Masha will meet me on the steps, and with enthusiasm. She will see in me such a saint! She is a strange, sweet girl; only she takes everything to heart so. And the *rôle* which I have to play before her — the *rôle* of dignity and importance — has already begun to seem to me serious and ridiculous. If she only knew how much I stand in awe of her," he said to himself. "Well, Kato" — that was his wife — "will probably be in good spirits to-day — really in good spirits, and the day will be excellent. Not as it was last week, owing to those Proshkinsky peasant women. She is a wonderful creature. And how afraid of her I am. But what is to be done about it? She herself is not happy."

Then he recalled a famous anecdote about a calf; how a proprietor who had quarreled with his wife was one day sitting at his window and saw a calf gamboling. "I would marry you," said the proprietor; and again he smiled, deciding everything puzzling and difficult, as was his wont, by a jest, generally directed against himself.

At the third verst, near the chapel, the postilion turned off to the left to take the cross-road, and the coachman shouted to him because he turned so short it struck the shaft horses with the pole, and from here on the calash rolled almost all the way down hill. Before they reached the house, the postilion looked at the coachman and pointed at something; the coachman looked at the lackey and also pointed at something. And they all gazed in one direction.

"What are you looking at?" asked Ivan Petrovitch.

"Wild geese," said Mikharla.

"Where?"

But, though he strained his eyes, he could not see anything.

"Yonder, there is a forest, and beyond is a cloud, and there between, if you will be good enough to look."

Still Ivan Petrovitch could not see anything. "Well, it is time for them. A week from to-day will be Annunciation."

"So it will."

"Well, go ahead."

At the little lodge Mishka jumped down from the foot-board and examined the road, then climbed back again, and the calash rolled smoothly along by the edge of the pond into the park, mounted the driveway, passed the ice-house and the laundry, from which the water was dripping, and skilfully rounding up stopped at the porch. The Chernuishefs' britchka was only just driving away from the yard. Immediately some people came hurrying down from the house: a surly-looking old man, Daniluitch, with side-whiskers, Nikola, Mikhaïla's brother, and the boy Pavlushka, and behind them a girl with large black eyes and red arms bare above the elbows, and also with open neck.

"Marya Ivanovna, Marya Ivanovna. Where are you? Here, your mamasha is getting anxious about you. Come," said the voice of the stout Katerina in the background.

But the little girl did not heed her; as her father expected, she seized him by the hand, and looked at him with a peculiar look.

"Tell me, papenka, have you had the sacrament," she asked, with a sort of terror.

"Yes, I have had the sacrament. Why, were you afraid that I was such a sinner that they would not let me have it?"

The little girl was evidently shocked at her father's levity on such a solemn occasion. She sighed, and as she went with him she held him by the hand and kissed it.

"Who has come?"

"It is young Chernuishef. He is in the drawing-room."

"Has mamma got up? What is she doing?"

"Mamenka is better to-day. She is sitting down stairs."

In the passage-way Ivan Petrovitch met the nurse Yevpraksia, his foreman Andrei Ivanovitch, and his surveyor, who was staying there to divide the land. All congratulated Ivan Petrovitch. In the drawing-room were sitting Luiza Karlovna Turgoni, for ten years a friend of the family, an *émigrée* governess, and a young man of sixteen, Chernuishef, with his French tutor.

### THIRD FRAGMENT

(Variant of the First Chapter)

ON the 14th of August, 1817, the sixth department of the Controlling Senate rendered a decision in the lawsuit between the "ekonom"<sup>1</sup> peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi and Prince Chernuishef, granting the land that was in dispute to the peasants.

This decision was unexpected and serious, and unfortunate for Chernuishef. The suit had been dragging along already for five years. Having been brought originally by the advocate of the rich and populous village of Izlegoshchi, it had been gained by the peasants in the District Court; but when Prince Chernuishef, by the advice of Ilya Mitrofanof, a solicitor, a domestic serf belonging to Prince Saltuikof, hired by him, appealed the case, he won it, and, moreover, the Izlegoshchi peasants were punished by having six of them, who had insulted the surveyor, sent to the mines.

After this, Prince Chernuishef, with a good-natured carelessness characteristic of him, was perfectly at ease, the more because he knew well that he had never "usurped" any land of the peasants, as it had been said in the peasants' petition. If any land had ever been "usurped" it had been done by his father, but since then more than forty years had passed away. He knew that the peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi

<sup>1</sup> *Ekonomicheskyy krestyanin* was formerly a peasant who belonged to a monastery and was subject to an ekonom or steward.

even without this land were prosperous, that they did not need it, and that they were good neighbors of his, and he could not understand why they were "mad" with him.

He knew that he had never injured any one, and that he had no wish to injure any one ; he had always lived with charity to all and that was all he wanted to do, and so he did not believe that they wanted to do him any wrong : he detested litigation, and therefore he had not labored in the senate, notwithstanding the advice and admonition of his attorney, Ilya Mitrofanof. Having disregarded the term of the appeal, he lost the case in the senate, and lost it in such a manner that ruin stared him in the face. According to the decree of the senate not only were five thousand desyatins of land to be taken from him, but on account of his illegal use of the land he was obliged to pay the peasants 107,000 rubles.

Prince Chernuishef had had eight thousand serfs, but all his estates were mortgaged ; he had many debts, and this decision of the senate ruined him together with all his great family. He had a son and five daughters. He woke up when it was too late to do anything in the senate. According to Ilya Mitrofanof he had one way of salvation ; that was to petition the Emperor and appeal the case to the imperial council. For this it was necessary personally to address one of the ministers or one of the members of the council, or even — and this would be still better — the Emperor himself. Having decided on this plan of action, Prince Grigori Ivanovitch, in the autumn of 1817, left his beloved Studentso, where he always lived, and went with his whole family to Moscow. He went to Moscow and not to Petersburg, because during the autumn of that year the sovereign, with his court, and all his highest dignitaries, and a part of the Guard in which Grigori Ivanovitch's son served, was to be in Moscow for the ceremony of dedicating the cathedral of the Saviour in memory of the deliverance of Russia from the invasion of the French.

Even in August immediately after the receipt of the

horrible news of the decision of the senate, Prince Grigori Ivanovitch found himself in Moscow. His steward had been sent on in advance to make ready his private house on the Arbata; a baggage-train was sent on with furniture, servants, horses, equipages, and provisions. In September the prince, with his whole family in seven carriages drawn by his own horses, reached Moscow, and settled down in their mansion. His relatives and friends, who had come to Moscow from the country or from Petersburg, began to gather in Moscow in September; the Moscow life with all its gayeties, the arrival of his son, the coming out of his daughters, and the success of his eldest daughter, Aleksandra, the one blonde among all the dark Chernuishefs, so occupied and engrossed the prince, that notwithstanding the fact that he was spending there in Moscow all the remainder of his substance,—in case he had to pay his fine,—he kept forgetting his chief business, and was annoyed and bored when Ilya Mitrofanof mentioned it, and he kept putting off doing anything to further the success of his affairs.

Ivan Mironovitch Baushkin, the chief advocate of the muzhiks, who had carried the lawsuit through the senate with such zeal, who knew all the ways and means of dealing with the secretaries and head clerks, and who had so cleverly spent at Petersburg in the form of bribes the ten thousand rubles collected from the muzhiks, had also now put an end to his activity and had returned to the village; where, with the reward for his success and with the money not expended in bribes, he had bought a piece of woodland of a neighboring proprietor, and had established in it an office.<sup>1</sup> The lawsuit in the highest instance was at an end, and by good rights the affair should now take care of itself.

Of all those that had been entangled in this affair, the only ones who could not forget it were the six muzhiks, who had been for seven months in prison, and their families deprived of their head men. But there was nothing to be done about it. There they were in the Krasnoslobodsky prison, and their families were strug-

<sup>1</sup> *Izba-kontora.*

gling to get along without them. There was no one to petition. Even Ivan Mironovitch declared that there was nothing he could do in their behalf; that this was not an affair of the "mir" or of the civil court, but a criminal case. The muzhiks were in prison and no one was working in their behalf; only the family of Mikhaïl Gerasimovitch, especially his old woman, Tikhonovna, could not acquiesce in the fact that her "golden one," her old man, Gerasimuitch, was confined in prison with a shaven head. Tikhonovna could not remain in peace. She besought Mironuitch to work for her; Mironuitch refused. Then she resolved herself to go, and pray God to release her old man. The year before she had vowed to go on a pilgrimage to the saints, and yet for lack of leisure, and because she did not like to leave the house in the care of her sisters-in-law, who were young, she had postponed it for a year. Now that she had become poor, and Gerasimuitch was in prison, she remembered her vow. She let her household cares have the go-by, and with a deacon's wife of her village, she started in on her pilgrimage. At first they went to the district where the old man was in prison; they carried him some shirts, and thence they went to Moscow, passing through the governmental city.

On the way Tikhonovna related the story of her misfortune, and the deacon's wife advised her to petition the Tsar, who, she had heard, was to be at Penza, telling her what were the chances of pardon. When the pilgrims reached Penza they learned that the Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Nikolaï Pavlovitch, and not the Tsar himself, had already come to Penza. Coming forth from the cathedral at Penza, Tikhonovna forced her way through the line, threw herself on her knees, and began to beg for her lord and master. The Grand Duke was amazed, the governor was angry, and the old woman was arrested. After a day's detention she was set free, and went on to Troïtsa. At this monastery Tikhonovna prepared for the sacrament, and made confession to Father Paisi. At confession she told all her misfortune, and confessed how she had tried to offer

her petition to the Tsar's brother. Father Patsi told her there was no sin in that, and that she was on the right track, and that it was no sin to petition the Tsar, and then he let her go. Also at Khotkovo she stopped with "an inspired woman,"<sup>1</sup> and this woman advised her to present her petition to the Tsar himself. Tikhonovna, on her way back with the deacon's wife, went to Moscow to visit the saints there. There she learned that the Tsar was in Moscow, and it seemed to her that God had commanded her to petition the Tsar. All she had to do was to get the petition written. At Moscow the pilgrims stopped at an inn. They asked for a night's lodgings; it was granted them. After supper the deacon's wife lay down on the oven, but Tikhonovna lay down on a bench, placing her *kotomka*, or birch-bark wallet, under her head, and went to sleep. In the morning, before it was light, Tikhonovna got up, awakened the deacon's wife, and came down into the court before the *avornik* had called them.

"You are up early, *baushka*,"<sup>2</sup> said he.

"You see we are going to matins, benefactor," replied Tikhonovna.

"God go with you, *baushka*. Christ save you," said the *dvornik*; and the pilgrim women started for the Kreml.

After attending matins and mass, and having kissed the holy things, the two old women, with difficulty finding their way, went to the Chernuishefs'. The deacon's wife said that the old lady Chernuishef had strongly urged her to stop there, that she always received all pilgrims.

"There we shall find a man to help with the petition," said the deacon's wife, and the two pilgrims went wandering along the streets, asking the way as they went. The deacon's wife had been there once, but had forgotten where it was. Twice they were almost crushed, men shouted at them, and scolded them. Once a police offi-

<sup>1</sup> *Blazhennaya*, an eccentric, fanatic woman.

<sup>2</sup> *S Bogom*, *baushka*; *baushka* for *babushka*, old woman.



cer grasped the deacon's wife by the shoulder, and gave her a push, forbidding them to pass through the street on which they were walking, and directing them into a wilderness of lanes. Tikhonovna did not know that they were driven out of Vozdvizhenka for the very reason that the Tsar himself, of whom she was all the time thinking, and to whom she was going to write and present the petition, was to ride along that very street.

The deacon's wife, as always, walked heavily and painfully. Tikhonovna, as usual, went along with a free and easy gait, like a young woman. The pilgrims paused at the very gates. The deacon's wife did not know the place; a new izba had been built there; it had not been there before. But when the deacon's wife saw a well and pump at one corner of the dvor she recognized it. The dogs began to bark, and sprang toward the old women who appeared with staves.

"Don't be afraid, they won't hurt you," cried the dvornik. "Back, you rascals," said he to the dogs, waving his broom at them. "You see they are country dogs, and they hanker after country folks. Come round this way. God keeps the frost off."

But the deacon's wife, afraid of the dogs, pitifully mumbling, sat down on a bench at the gate, and asked the dvornik to take the dogs away. Tikhonovna, bowing low before the dvornik, and leaning on her staff, spreading wide her legs, tightly bound with leg-wrappers, halted near the other, calmly looking ahead, and waiting for the dvornik, who was coming toward them.

"Whom do you want?" asked the dvornik.

"Don't you know us, benefactor? Is n't your name Yegor?" asked the deacon's wife. "We have been on a pilgrimage, and here we have come to her excellency."

"You are from Izlegoshchi," said the dvornik. "Are you not the old deacon's wife? Well, well! Come into the izba. They will receive you. No one is ever turned away. But who is this woman?"

He pointed to Tikhonovna.

"I am from Izlegoshchi. I am Gerasim's wife; I

was a Fadeyef," said Tikhonovna. "I am from Izlegoshchî too."

"Is that so? I have heard your man is in jail. Is that so?"

Tikhonovna made no reply. She only sighed, and with a powerful gesture shifted her wallet and her shuba on her back.

The deacon's wife asked if the old princess was at home, and, learning that she was, asked to be taken to her. Then she asked after her son, who had been made a functionary, and through the prince's favor was serving in Petersburg. The dvornik could not answer her question, and he took them along a planked walk, across the yard, into the common izba. The old women entered the izba, which was full of people, women and children, young and old, domestic serfs, and there they bowed low toward the images. The laundress and the old princess's chambermaid immediately recognized the deacon's wife and immediately engaged her in conversation; they took her wallet from her, and sat her down at a table, and offered her something to eat.

Tikhonovna, meantime, crossing herself toward the images and greeting every one, stood by the door waiting to be invited in. At the very door, by the first window, sat an old man mending boots.

"Sit down, babushka; why do you stand? Sit down here and take off your wallet," said he.

"There is no room in there for her to sit down. Take her into the dark room,"<sup>1</sup> remarked some woman.

"Ah, here we have Madame de Chalmé," said a young lackey, pointing to the cocks on the back of Tikhonovna's zipun; "stockings and slippers too!" He pointed to her leg wrappers and bark shoes — novelties for Moscow.

"You ought to have some like them, Parasha."

"Come, come into the izba. I will show you the way."

And the old cobbler, thrusting in his awl, got up, but

<sup>1</sup> *Chornaya izba*, dark room of the hut, in contradistinction to the *chistaya izba*, the room where there is no oven.

as he caught sight of a young girl he called to her and bade her lead the old woman into the kitchen.

Tikhonovna not only paid no heed to what was said around her and about her, but she did not even hear it or notice it. Ever since she had left her home she had been impressed with the sense of the necessity of laboring in God's service, and with one other feeling which had come into her soul she knew not how — the necessity of presenting the petition. As she left the sitting-room where the people were, she went close to the deacon's wife, and bowing low said:—

"For Christ's sake, Matushka Paramonovna, don't forget my business. Ask if there isn't some man."

"What does the old woman want?"

"She has a grievance, and the people advise her to present a petition to the Tsar."

"Go straight to the Tsar and take it," said the joker of a lackey.

"Oh, fool, what an ill-bred fool," said the old cobbler. "I will teach you with my last, in spite of your good coat, not to make sport of old women."

The lackey began to call names, but the old man, not heeding him, led Tikhonovna into the kitchen. Tikhonovna was glad to be sent out from the crowded sitting-room and led into the "black" izba which the coachmen frequented. In the sitting-room everything was too clean and the people were all clean, and Tikhonovna did not feel at home. But in the coachmen's "black" izba it was like the hut of a peasant, and Tikhonovna was much more contented. The room was finished in spruce, and measured about twenty-one feet, and dark, with a great stove and with sleeping-benches and berths, and the newly laid floor was all trampled over with mud. When Tikhonovna entered the izba she found there the cook, a white, ruddy, fat peasant woman with the sleeves of her chintz dress rolled up, laboriously putting a pot into the oven with an oven-hook; then a fine-looking young coachman practising the balalaika, and a crooked-legged old man with a full, white, soft beard sitting on the sleeping-bench, with a skein of silk in his

mouth, sewing something delicate and beautiful; a ragged, dark young man in a shirt and blue trousers, with a surly face, chewing bread, was sitting on a bench near the stove, leaning his head on both hands, supported on his knees.

The barefooted girl with shining eyes ran with her light young legs in advance of the old woman, and opened the door, which was dripping with steam, and whined with her high-pitched voice:—

“Auntie Marina, Simonuitch sends this old woman to you and tells you to give her something to eat. She is from our parts, and has been making a pilgrimage to the saints with Paramonovna. They are giving Paramonovna some tea, and Vlashevna sends this one to you.”

The fluent little girl would have continued still longer talking glibly; the words seemed to flow from her mouth, and she evidently liked to hear her own voice. But Marina, who was sweating over the oven, not having settled to her satisfaction the pot of shchi which stuck half way in the oven, cried out angrily to her:—

“Now, that’ll do. Stop your chatter; how can we feed any more old women; we can’t even feed our own. Curse you,” she cried, to the pot which almost tipped over as it moved from its hearth on which it had stuck.

But having once got her pot settled she looked round, and seeing the pleasant-faced Tikhonovna with her wallet and in regular country attire, kissing the cross and bowing low to the corner where the images were, she instantly felt compunction for her words; and, apparently bethinking her of the labors which tormented her, and putting her hand to her breast where below the collar-bone the buttons fastened her dress, she felt to see if one was unfastened, and, putting her hand to her head, she pulled back the knot of her kerchief which covered her well-oiled hair, and thus she stood leaning on her oven-fork waiting for the greeting of the pleasant-looking old woman. Having bowed for the last time to the image, Tikhonovna turned round and bowed to the three directions.

"God be your refuge! I wish your health,"<sup>1</sup> said she.

"We ask your blessing, auntie," said the tailor.

"Thank you, babushka, take off your wallet. There is a place for you," said the cook, pointing to the bench where the ragged man sat. "Make yourself at home, if you can. How cold it is growing, is n't it?"

The ragged fellow, scowling still more angrily, got up, moved along, and, still chewing his bread, kept his eyes fixed on the old woman. The young coachman bowed low, and, ceasing to strum his instrument, began to tune up the strings of his balalaika, looking first at the old woman, then at the tailor, not knowing how to treat the old woman: whether with deference as it seemed to him proper, because the old woman wore the same kind of attire as his babushka and the mother of his house did — he was a postilion taken from among the muzhiks — or banteringly, as he would have liked to do, and as it seemed to him the suitable thing for him in his present position in his blue poddevka and his top boots. The tailor closed one eye and seemed to smile, pushing the skein of silk to one side of his mouth, and he also looked at her. Marina started to put in another pot, but, though she was busy with her work, she looked at the old woman as she cleverly and deftly took off her wallet, and, endeavoring not to incommode any one, stowed it under the bench. Nastka ran to her and helped her; she took out from under the bench the boots which were in the way of the wallet.

"Uncle Pankrat," she cried, addressing the surly man, "I have your boots here; what shall I do with them?"

"The devil take them; throw them into the oven," said the surly man, flinging them into the farther corner.

"Come here, you wise one, Nastka," said the tailor; "the journeyman needs some one to pacify him."

"Christ save you, little girl. It is so comfortable," said Tikhonovna. "Only, my dear young man, we have disturbed you," said the old woman, addressing Pankrat.

"It is of no consequence," said Pankrat.

Tikhonovna sat down on the bench, taking off her

zipun and carefully folding it up, and then she began to take off her foot-gear. First of all, she unwound her cords, which she had smoothed with the greatest solicitude for this pilgrimage; then she unwound carefully the lamb's-wool white leg-wrappers, and, carefully folding them, laid them on her wallet.

While she was unwinding the second leg, Marina awkwardly again caught the pot on something, and it spilt over, and she began once more to scold, grasping it with her oven-hook.

"Something has evidently burnt out the hearth. You ought to have it plastered," said Tikhonovna.

"How can I get it plastered? The chimney is not right; you put in two loaves of bread a day, you take out some, but the others are spoiled."

In answer to Marina's complaints about the loaves and the burnt-out hearth, the tailor stood up in defense of the conveniences of the Chernuishevsky house, and he explained how they had come suddenly to Moscow, that the whole izba had been built in three weeks, and the oven set up; and there were at least a hundred domestics, all of whom had to be fed.

"It's evident it is hard work. It is a great establishment," said Tikhonovna.

"And where did God bring you from, babushka?" asked the tailor.

And immediately Tikhonovna, while still continuing to divest herself of her wraps, told whence she came and where she had been and how she was on her way home. But she said nothing about the petition. The conversation went on uninterruptedly. The tailor learned all about the old woman, and the old woman learned about the awkward and handsome Marina, how her husband was a soldier and she had been taken as a cook, that the tailor himself was making kaftans for the coachmen, that the little girl who ran errands was the house-keeper's orphan, and that the shaggy, surly Pankrat was in the employ of the overseer, Ivan Vasilyevitch.

Pankrat left the izba, stumbling at the door; the tailor told how he was such a clownish peasant, but

to-day was particularly surly. That afternoon he had broken two of the overseer's windows, and that day they were going to flog him at the stable. Ivan Vasilyevitch is coming now to attend to the flogging. The little coachman was a countryman taken to be postilion,<sup>1</sup> and he is growing up, and is now getting his hand in to take care of the horses, and he plays the balalaika, but he is not very skilled at it. ....

<sup>1</sup> The old peasant calls the German word *Vorreiter*, *foletorui*

# TIKHON AND MALANYA

(A STORY FROM COUNTRY LIFE)

THE village had an idle and holiday aspect. The people were all at church. Only the little children, some of the mothers and a few muzhiks, who were too lazy to go to mass, stayed at home. The women were engaged in cooking; the children were crawling about the doors; the muzhiks were gazing at something out of doors. The streets were deserted.

It was *Petrof-dyen*—St. Peter's Day. At the end of the street was heard the jingling of harness-bells and a troika appeared attached to a post-wagon or *telyega*.

One of the muzhiks that had stayed at home, Anisim Zhidkof, hearing the bells, threw down the wagon-box which he was working on, and opening the creaky gate went out into the street to see who was coming. The manes of the outside horses were pleated with adornments; the thill-horse, a roan well known to him, had its head fastened high under the *duga* or arch. Shaking her head a little and trotting swiftly, she started up when the *yamshchik*, bracing his knee against the box, shouted to her.

The horses were well-groomed but not sweaty, although the sun was already shining fiercely from a perfectly cloudless sky. The *yamshchik* was a fine-looking fellow in a new *kaftan* and cap.

"Yermilin, Tikhon," said Anisim to himself, as he recognized the *yamshchik* and hurried along the middle of the street in his new *bast shoes*.

Tikhon, as he drove past Anisim, silently lifted his cap and it was evident by the expression of his face that he was very happy and well aware that none could help envying him and his troika which he himself had matched



and brought into such a fine condition and that he was endeavoring not to make others too humiliatingly conscious of his self-satisfaction.

He did not shout to his horses, and after he had taken off his new cap he put it back not askew but quite straight and only touched the off horse with the rein, and, turning not far from Anisim, began to pull in the troika carefully and rather too deliberately, bringing the horses down, which even without this were already walking (with perfect dignity) into the well-known gates. Anisim, whose affairs had not been going any too well this Summer, was filled with envy as well as with admiration and came up to Tikhon to chat with him.

The old mother, the only one left in the house; came out on the steps.

"I hear the bells; I say to myself, which one of the yamshchiks is it?" said she joyously—"I was just going to make some more of those cakes and I didn't hear anything. Then I heard and the bells were quite near."

"How are you, Matushka?" cried the son, leaping down in his heavy boots near the head of the wagon.

"Fine, Tishenka, and you are alive and well?"

And she went on to talk as she always did—talking about everything, as of recollections of something melancholy and long past. "I thinks to myself if our Tikhon was here,—and the old man's gone and the women—they're at mass——"

Tikhon paid no attention to her, took a bundle from the wagon, went into the izba, bowed to the ikons and passing through the entry, opened the door. He stuffed his mittens and his whip into his belt, closed the door so as it would not catch, led the outside horses by the bridle, undid the traces, snapped the whip, set the horses free, took off their collars, led them away, making no noise about it, nor twitching them; and as soon as he had finished with one, in the same way without haste but without a second's delay he attended to the other. Nothing got tangled, nothing was left lying around, nothing was left at loose ends under his hands but everything went smoothly and regularly, just as if it had been oiled.

When there was nothing more for his hands to do, his huge fingers spread out very far from his wrists as if they were trying to grasp something more and work at it.

While he was unharnessing he kept up an unceasing stream of talk with Anisim, who had come up. Anisim had come up lazily moving his lapti-shod feet and using his belt to scratch his belly under his clean white shirt. He kept lifting his cap and putting it on again. Tikhon also kept raising his and putting it on again.

"Well, have you got tired of your young wife yet?" asked Anisim with a little laugh but wishing to ask a quite different question.

"Not at all," replied Tikhon.

"How about our folks—how do they live—the Mitroshins?" suggested Anisim, now quite serious and shaking his head.

"What's the use? Some live well: others ill. It's the same at the stations. How do you get along yourself, Uncle Anisim?" asked Tikhon, deliberately and thinking of himself with some pride.

"Tell me, did you swap off the brown, perhaps?"—Anisim could now ask the question he wanted to put—"And say, did you buy the roan?"

"The brown: if dad hadn't got mad about it I might have got rid of him long ago. 'Twas worth it."

And Tikhon, not without satisfaction told how he had swapped and acquired, how much he had made and how much less others had made than he had. Anisim, jokingly and seriously proposed to set up the vodka. Tikhon quietly but firmly refused.

During all the talk he kept on with his work. The horses were unharnessed and he led them into the shed.

Anisim, having learnt all that he wanted to know, began scratching himself silently with both hands and after he had scratched himself a while, went off.

After pulling down the hay for the horses from the bin Tikhon settled his hat on his forehead and, spreading out his fingers still more, went into the izba. But there was nothing for him to do there and his fingers

stayed as they were. He merely shook his hat a little and hung it on a nail, brushed off a place where to lay his armyak or coat, stowed it away, and in his new Alexandrinsky shirt, which his mother had never seen him wear, sat down on the bench.

His drawers were of domestic make, the work of his mother but quite new; his boots the usual kind worn by drivers, with nails, he had taken them off in the vestibule and smeared them with tar. There was really nothing for him to do; he smoothed out his cuffs which had been rumpled under his kaftan and then began to take out of the package the presents he had brought. For his wife there was a pattern of chintz with big flowers; for his mother a white handkerchief with narrow border; and baranka-crackers for all the rest of the household.

"Thanks, Tishenka, that would be too much for me," said the old woman, spreading her handkerchief out on the table and running her finger-nail over it. "Just what I was wanting. The old man has been in Popovka since early mass but I came home. The young women wanted to go to the later service; they helped me get things ready and started, and here I am alone."

And the old woman, laying the handkerchief in a little box, resumed her work about the stove and while working kept up a steady stream of talk:—

"Glory be to thee, O Lord," said she, "only my old man is dying of his leg; when it's wet he simply yells. Grishutka (Grishutka was Tikhon's younger bachelor brother) has to keep doing more and more of the master's work for him. Thank goodness the Government don't send him off. Mikheyitch always goes for the starosta. Well, there's nothing to complain about; it brings in steady orders. Only says he, don't send Grishka to the mowing field; he couldn't stand it, he's too small yet. 'T other day they tended the master's gardens, so the old man sent Grishutka: he mended the scythe for him and Gerasim,—my daughter-in-law's father,—asked to take his place; he's so worn out, dear heart. 'Matushka,' says he, 'I can't stand it, my poor arms and legs all ache so!' But where is the trouble with him? His body's sound,

and strong like a young man. So we don't know what to do: either you must stay for the mowing or we'll have to hire a helper."

"Well, what's the news about the gentry?" exclaimed Tikhon, evidently not caring to talk about such an important matter with a woman, even though it was his own mother.

"Twas said t'other day that they'd all be here, and then nothing more was said about it. The young one is living here but we don't hear much of him. Andreyi Ilyitch manages everything. The muzhiks say nothing; only there was some trouble with him over the meadow, the old man knows; he was at the meeting; he'll tell the whole story. They brought the manure, God be praised, and spread it all over the ground. A bushel or so was left. The old man knows. The enforced labor didn't amount to anything either. They kept postponing it for the muzhiks. But this was very hard for the women. They always had it all—had it all. It tormented 'em by keeping 'em in. One woman (what was her name?)—had to spend all her time weeding the beets. I was home always and struggling on alone. Your wife and the soldier's wife had to be away at the big house. Making bread, milking the cows, and I have to make the beds. How long my legs will serve me I don't know—whether God 'll let me go on. But your baba's young, she may work hard all day but when she gets home she's ready to sing and dance, she's such a good singer. Once in a while some one asks after her: a young man, courageous; but the folks praise her: very quick at her work and nothing bad to say of her. Well, once in a while she has a squabble with the soldier's wife—it's nothing. The old man yells at 'em; it's all over. Mostly, she's happy, bless her heart! We've been hoping and expecting you'd come. Yesterday I made some pies; I says to myself, Who'll be eating my pies . . . If I'd 'a' known for sure I'd 'a' killed a rooster for my dear son. Glory be, the hen's been hatchin',—we sold three . . ."

The old woman kept on talking and told her son many other things—about the weaving, about the threshing—

floor, about the live-stock, about the neighbors; about the soldiers that passed through, and all the time she was busy at her work either at the stove or at the table or in the pantry.

And Tikhon sat on the bench, now asking some question, now telling some story himself and then picking up the comb where it was always kept, he ran it through his thick curly hair and his small reddish beard. And he felt a sense of contentment as he looked around the izba and saw his wife's shirt lying in the loft and then the cat sitting on the stove and washing herself for the holiday; and then the spinning-wheel standing broken in the corner; and then at the hen which, paying no attention to him, was minding her own business and wandering about the room with her big chickens; and then at the whip which he used to take when he went out to watch the horses by night and which Grishka had tossed into a corner.

Not merely his extended fingers but also his eyes watching everything and studying everything demanded work; it was irksome to him to sit down and do nothing. He would have taken the scythe, he would have threshed, he would have swept the floor of the loft or done anything, but there was no time for any real work before dinner would be ready. While he and the old mother were still talking he picked up the whip which needed mending, got some hemp, went out on the steps, hung the skein from a nail and began to twist it in the door with his healthy strong hands meant only for dealing with big weights: and all the time he kept looking up the street where the people would be coming home from church. But still there was no one to be seen—only small boys in clean-washed shirts were playing around the thresholds. A five-year-old-urchin still wearing a dirty shirt, came up to the doorstep and stopped when he saw Tikhon. This was the soldier's son, Tikhon's nephew.

"Syemka, O Syemka, whose boy are you?" asked Tikhon smiling at himself at the idea of his taking any notice of such a boy.

"The soldier's," answered the boy.

"Where's your mother?"

"She goed to mass and granddaddy goed to mass too," said the boy proud of his ability to talk.

"Can't you say who I am?"

He took a cookie out of his pocket and gave it to him.

"There she comes, mass 's out," said the boy drawlingly, pointing up the street and instinctively clutching his cookie.

"But who 'm I?" asked Tikhon.

"You?. . . You're uncle."

"Whose uncle?"

"Aunt Malanka's."

"Do you know Aunt Malanka?"

"Syemka!" cried the old woman from within the izba, hearing the little chap's voice, "Where did you come from? Come here you Devil's kid, come here till I wash your face and hands and put on a clean shirt."

The "kid" slipped through the door to his grandmother and Tikhon stood up, snapped the mended whip two or three times to see if it was all right. The whip cracked finely.

The "kid" was stripped to the skin and well doused with water. His screams could be heard all over the izba. Tikhon stood on the steps and gazed into the street.

The day was beautiful; the larks were soaring above the rye-fields. The rice-fields were all a-glitter. In the forest the dew was dried off on the sunny side and the birds were singing. The people were coming from church. The old men marched along with great long steps (the steps of laboring men) in their white newly-washed onuchi or leg-wrappers and their new lapti or bast shoes, some had canes, some walked alone or two and two; young muzhiks appeared in boots; the village starosta Mikhevitch marched along in a black kaftan made of mill-cloth: tall, thin and feeble as a rush came Rvezun, the lame Fokanuitch, the greatly-bearded Osip Naumuitch. There came house servants, artizans in their

svitki-coats, lackeys in German clothes, women and girls from the big houses, in dresses called by the muzhiks "s podzontikami" because they go with parasols. They were the only ones at whom the peasant dogs barked. Girls came in droves in yellow and red sarafans; children in belted armyaks, bent old women in clean white kerchiefs with canes and without canes, babies in white swaddling-cloths, and old maids in a motley throng in red kerchiefs and in white sleeveless podevki with gold lace on their skirts. They came along gayly, chatting, overtaking one another, greeting, scrutinizing the new clothes, glass pearls, sewed shoes.

(Yermila's womenfolk—all very elegant came along not mingling with the others, not because they had better clothes and sarafans than anyone else but because the old man Yermila himself was near them and had his eye on them. There's trouble if he sees them stop to play with the children or the like. The boys walked on one side at a little distance from Yermila and laughed at his portly stomach. Osip Naumuitch walks along by himself in his bast lapti and miserable old *kaftanishko* but everyone knows that he had money enough to buy out the whole village.)

Here came a lean, handsomely-attired woman, what is called a regular *bogachikha*—the type of the rich peasant woman. She had put on such glass pearls and gold lace but this pink of fashion was the very worst and most slatternly of women, so that her husband had left off beating her.

There came along the wife of a clerk with a parasol, very showily dressed, but their working woman, Vasilisa, had dressed herself up still more extravagantly and was her rival in the dispute as to which was most like a real lady. And there came Matryoshkin, a household servant who had bought in town the day before a red fustian shirt and was wearing it but did not get so much enjoyment from it as the other people who marvelled at it. Then came Fokanuitch's girl with the house-servants, talking animatedly with Mavra Andreyevna on the question why, being well-educated, she wanted to go into a

nunnery. Behind them came the Minayev women and the mother was sobbing—that very day she had carried her child to the graveyard. And there Ryezun's young wife stepped along decked out like a merchant's lady and hid her face in swaddling clothes; it was the first time since her first baby was born that she had been to church and had given the child its first communion. And there came a soldier in a new overcoat, already drunk; he had got it somewhere and was playing up to the women. But Bolkhin's old wife found her strength giving out; she sat down and prayed to God and told those passing that it was the last time she should ever go to church, that death was on her track; any anyone looking at her could see that she was probably right. And there was Tikhon's old father, striding along with big steps and his whole figure showed what he was. And there was she . . .

A beauty, whoever she was, whether peasant woman or high-born lady, it could be seen from afar. And she moved in a different way, sailed along as it were and carried her head and swung her arms differently from the other women; and her color was brighter, her shirt-waist was whiter and her kerchief redder. And if such a beauty is your own, you recognize her even farther off. So Tikhon from the other end of the street recognized his *baba*.

Malanya was coming along with the soldier's wife and two other babas and with them came the soldier and he was saying something, gesticulating with his hands. And Tikhon could see that the color in her cheeks burned brighter than in the others.

Malanya, wherever she was, always attracted to her and surrounded herself with other young folks, muzhiks and children, and as they passed by her they ceased talking among themselves and gazed at her. Even the sour old man went in such a way as not to attract her ridicule. The children and young girls swept by her, looked at her askance and said "There, see how Malanya walks."

But Malanya walked just exactly like the other married women, no better attired or more startling or gayer



than the others. She wore a checkered *panyova* or skirt bound with gold galoon, a white shirt-waist embroidered in red, a similar *zanavyeska* and a red kerchief on her head and new shoes with woolen stockings. The others wore sarafans and *poddevki* or sleeveless cloaks and colored shirt-waists and embroidered shoes. Just exactly like the others she walked along with a strong easy stride, with her arms, her breasts shaking and her black eyes glancing in every direction. Yes there was something about her which made her noticeable from a long distance and which made those near by find it difficult to take their eyes from her.\*)

She came along, exchanging jokes with the soldier and not thinking of her husband at all.

"By God, I'll be elected one of the elders" the soldier was saying, "'cause o' course I know how to boss the women, Andrey Ilyitch knows me. Then Malanya I'll give it to you some!"

"Yes, you will" replied Malanya, "That's the way we got it last year in the Zemsky's barn:, beating flax, we loaded it on him, we pulled off his drawers and tormented him so that he ran away and he didn't stop to get his drawers he was that confused. You'd have had to laugh."

And the women all burst out laughing so that they couldn't even walk and the soldier's wife, always quick to laugh at anything, squatted down and banged her knees with her palms and squeaked with her laughter.

"So it'll be with you" said Malanya, thumping her friend with her elbow and somewhat recovering from her laughing.

"Come on, by God," said the soldier, repeating what he had said before "I'll buy some sweet vodka, I'll treat."

"Her husband 'll be sweeter than your vodka" said the soldier's wife, "he was expecting to get home to-day."

"Sweeter, may be, but as he ain't here one's got to have some fun on a holiday," said the soldier.

"Why do you take the joy out of my life?" said

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(\*The paragraphs in parenthesis are from a variant manuscript not essentially different from the text but on the whole preferable.—N. H. D.)

Malanya, "Buy some more vodka, Barchef, we will certainly come."

And suddenly Malanya remembered that her husband had promised to come for the second holiday and that he had not come and a cloud flitted across her face. But this was for a second only and she began once more to joke with the soldier. The soldier in a whisper told her to be sure to come alone.

"I will come, Barchef, I will come," said Malanya aloud and again burst into a laugh. (It was rather necessary for healthy young working people to be gay on a holiday.)

The soldier was offended and said no more.

Anisim Zhidkof who had seen Tikhon arrive in the village, was standing at the entrance of his izba; watching the women passing by. When Malanya came opposite he suddenly poked her in the side with his finger and make a noise like a frog with his lips:—"krrr." Malanya gave a laugh and hit him with the back of her hand.

"Say, you young dancer, do you talk nonsense with the soldier when your husband's eyes are on you?" said Anisim, laughing at her; but, noticing that Malanya became all flushed and confused when she heard her husband mentioned, he added gravely so that she might see he was not joking:—"By God, he came in his troika while you were at mass. Got something for you."

Malanya immediately separated from the other women and with quick steps passed along the street. As she went along the street she looked round at the soldier.

"Say, buy some more sweet vodka and I will bring Tikhon: he loves it!"

The soldatka and the other women laughed; the soldier scowled.

"Go along with you, you Devil's woman!" he exclaimed.

Malanya, her new skirt rustling and her shoes thumping hurried home. Her neighbor had to laugh again at her, because her husband had brought her "the something" in the shape of a whip, but Malanya making no reply ran to her izba.

Tikhon was standing on the steps, and looked at his "woman," smiled and cracked the whip. Malanya be-

came quite different as soon as she had heard of her husband and especially when she saw him. Her cheeks grew redder, her eyes and motions became gayer and her voice more ringing.

"Ah I see you've brought me a whip for a present," she cried laughing.

"Ai-to! is it a poor one?" asked her husband.

"Not at all—a fine one," she said in reply and they went into the izba.

Immediately afterwards the old man came and went out with Tikhon to look at the horses. Malanya took off her zanavyeska and proceeded to help her mother prepare the dinner; she kept looking at the door. The old man came into the izba; the old woman began to help him off with his shoes and leggings. Malanya ran out into the dvor where Tikhon was, threw both arms around him and pressed him to herself with such force that he yelled and laughed; kissing her on the mouth and the cheeks.

"Truly, I wanted to go to you," said Malanya, "the same old story, the same old story, such a bore, even the holidays, nothing to see."

And she clung to him still closer, even lifted him up a little and tried to bite him.

"Have patience and I will take thee to the station," said Tikhon, "I too was lonely without thee."

Grishutka came out of the izba and, laughing a little, called them into dinner. The old man, the old woman, Tikhon, Grishutka and the soldier's cub, after repeating their prayer, sat down at the table; the women served and ate standing.

Tikhon had not distributed his gifts nor had he handed his father any money. All this he intended to do after dinner. The father, though he was satisfied with all the reports that Tikhon had brought, still was cross. He was always cross at home especially of a holiday, until he became drunk. Tikhon got out the money and sent the soldatka after vodka. The old man said not a word but silently sipped his *shchi*, only glancing now and then over the cup at the soldatka and telling her where to get the bottle.

The troika was fine, the money brought was satisfactory; but the old man was vexed because his son had swapped the brown gelding. The brown gelding, which had been poisoned, the old man himself had bought the previous Summer of a trader and he had never been willing to acknowledge that he had been cheated; and now he was angry because his son had got rid of a horse which in his opinion was such a good one! He ate in silence and all were silent except Malanya, who helped at table and joked at her husband and her brother-in-law. The old man himself had previously been to the station but he knew nothing about this transaction and he had disposed of two of a troika of horses, so that he came back home "with one whip." He was an industrious muzhik and not stupid, only he liked to drink too much and therefore he was ruining his affairs, when he took charge of them himself. Now he had a mixed feeling of pleasure and annoyance not on account of the brown gelding only but also because his son had come out well at the station, while he himself had failed when he went out as a yamshchik.

"You shouldn't have swapped the horse, 'twas a good horse," he muttered.

The son made no reply. Whether he understood or it was merely accidental Tikhon made no reply at all but began to tell stories of his muzhiks who worked at the station, especially about Pashka Shintyak who had sold all three of his horses and even got rid of his horse-collar.

Pashka Shintyak was the son of a muzhik with whom the old man had once driven and who had cheated him. This was an old feud. The old man suddenly began to laugh so strangely that the women folks stared at him.

"There, the highbrow devil, he's just like his father—he won't get rich by lying, sure."

And after that the old man, having eaten his kasha, wiped his beard and his mustache and began gayly to ask his son how he had been doing the last three months, how the horses ran, at what rate they paid and all with evident pride and satisfaction.

The son willingly told all about it and the conversation

was growing more and more lively when the soldatka all out of breath came bringing a green bottle; the old woman took a cloth and polished the portly tumbler with its bottom two fingers thick and the father and son each drank their share. The old woman was especially pleased with her son's account of the Tsar's passing through.

"And a Feldyager came galloping up, jumped off his horse; 'they're coming,' says he, 'they'll be here in ten minutes.' By the clock of course. Immediately Mikhail Nikanoruitch looked at his watch. 'Tikon,' says he, 'see if everything's all right.' My four-in-hand of course were all curried and hitched up. All ready then."

And Tikhon thrusting his big spreading fingers into his belt, shook his locks and looked at the women. They were all listening and looking at him. Malanya with a cup was sitting on the edge of the bench and was shaking her head just exactly as her husband was doing as if she were telling the story and smiling as if she were saying: "What fine young folks Tikhon and I are!"

The old man laid his two arms on the table and puckering his brows put his head to one side. He evidently understood the significance of the affair. The soldatka swinging her arms together from the very shoulders and in front of her like a pendulum came through the door but as she passed the stove, she sat down to listen to what was saying and began to fold her zanavyeska twice, then to double that, then twice again and then four times again.

The old woman who had only one way of listening to any kind of story, whether amusing or melancholy, assumed this manner which consisted in slightly wagging her head, sighing and whispering certain words that resembled a prayer. Grishka, on the contrary, listened to every kind of story as if he were waiting for the chance to burst out into a laugh. And so he did now: as soon as Tikhon repeated his reply to the policeman: "You're not driving but we are!" he burst into a horse-laugh. Tikhon did not give him a glance but it was evident enough that Grishka had good reason to laugh—nay he himself was convinced that his story was very entertaining.

"All of a sudden, you know, while I was looking at the horses under the light, for the night was dark—we heard a thundering noise down the street and then under the lights two six-horse teams, five double spans and six troikas. Instantly we are all at our numbers. In a second our Vaska Skomorokhninsky and the police-captain come thundering forward. I give the last polish to the troika, already the—You wouldn't say the police-captain got out of his telyega—he rolled out like a cat feet down. First word: "Samovars ready?"—All ready. "Send a couple of men to the bridge lively!" The railings were buckling! They send Shintyak with a road-officer. Then I drive straight up to the porch under the lights: Volodka drove. They told him not to go up on the bridge, but you see he couldn't hold in the horses. We drove ours up lively. Everything was fine. I look and see Mitka had got the one of the traces between his legs so it would stop him."

"Tell us, did *he* say anything?" asked the old man.

"His first word was, 'What station?' Captain says first thing, 'Selyukovka'—says he—'Your High Imperial majesty'—Ah?" imitated Tikhon. "'Ah'" And then he so marvellously thrust out his chest in mimicry of Majesty that the old woman wept as if she had heard the most gruesome news.

Grishka laughed but the little soldier-cub stared down from the loft at the old granddame and waited to see what was coming next.

"They brought up the six-in-hand; our Senka sat as groom. . . ."

"If they'd a' put Grishutka on," interrupted the old man, he 'a died o' fright."

"I'd 'a' blown the horn"—cried Grishka, showing all his teeth, with such an expression that it was evident that he would not have been afraid to drive with the Tsar or to bandy words with his father or with his older brother.

"Senka mounted," continued Tikhon, twisting his fingers, "'t was as light as day there were twenty lanterns: but when we drove away—couldn't see a thing."

"Tell us, did he say anything?" asked the old man.

"I was just listening: he just says 'Good,' says he, 'Proshchai—Fare well.' Then the superintendent, the captain, say, 'Look, Tikhon!'—But I say to myself, it ain't for you to look. He was saying a prayer to God. 'Sit up, Senka!'—Only at first it was painful. I looked round little by little—nitchivo, all right! we could go on with our work. He went off.—I says to myself, how's it going now?—But when we get to the bottom of the hill, there them rascals got tangled in the traces again, but as soon as the off-horse got free she ran on the rein the whole way. At the foot of the hill the captain was all out of breath. He alighted somehow.—'Off!'—he yelled. But I was already off, had and I got there four minutes before the hour."

The old man each time after he had finished his glass asked several times for a repetition of this episode.

After they had said their prayer they got up from the table. Tikhon handed over twenty-five rubles in cash and distributed his presents.

"Well, batyushka, let me go, there's very necessary work at the station and I was told to return without fail," said he.

"But how about the mowing?" asked the old man.

"Well, suppose you pay a hand fifteen rubles to help till Intercession-day. I get more than that with my troika. And if I keep my place till then, God willing, I'll get another troika and take Grishutka."

The old man said nothing and mounted to the loft. After he had struggled with himself a while, he called to Tikhon:—"I might have said this before. A fine young fellow's trying to get a job as a farm hand—Andryushka Aksyutkin. A good-natured young chap—doesn't know much—used to tend calves. And when Aksinya was asked. 'I wouldn't let him go to a stranger' says she, 'neighbor you take him for Christ's sake. If he has already hired out, then I don't know how 't would be. I won't pay twenty rubles,'" said the old man, as if that were an impossibility, however profitable the work of driving at the station might be.

The soldatka, when she heard this statement, laughed out loud.

"Andryukha hasn't hired out yet; Aksinya's in the village."

"Oh!" exclaimed the old man, "you go fetch her."

And immediately the soldatka went after her, swinging her arms. Malanya went out doors, put up the steps and crept into the barn; shortly after her Tikhon also came out and disappeared.

The old woman was putting away the pots; the old man lay on the stove, counting over the money which Tikhon had brought. Grishka went into the *dyennoye*, taking with him the small Syenka, the soldier's cub.

"Aksinya had gone with her son to take service at the Ilyukhins. She was at Kum Stepan's; I told her to come," said the soldatka—"yes, and the old men are gathering on the lane to do the fields."

"But where is Tikhon?"

"He's out and so's Malanya."

The old man frowned for a moment but there was nothing to be done; he got down, put on his shoes and went out doors. Malanya and Tikhon could be heard talking in the granary but as the old man approached the voices became quiet.

"God bless them," he said to himself, "natural to young folks; I've been there myself." \*

After talking with the muzhiks about the fields, the old man went to Kum Stepan's, came to an agreement with Aksinya at seventeen rubles and took his hired man back with him. By evening the old man was dead drunk. Tikhon had not been in the house all day. The people were strolling the street till late at night. Only the old woman and the new hired man, Andryushka, stayed indoors. The hired man pleased the old woman; he was a quiet, lean bachelor.

"Now be kind to him, Afremovna," said his mother as she left him. "He'll be lonely. He's a gentle little fellow and not lazy about his work. Only our poverty. . . ."

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(\*One variant of "Tikhon and Malanya" ended here.—N. H. D.)



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Afremovna promised to be kind to him and at supper helped him twice to kasha. Andryushka ate heartily and said not a word. When they had finished supper and his mother had gone, he sat a long time on the bench in silence and kept looking at the women, especially at Malanya.

Malanya twice drove him from his place on the pretext that she needed to get something and she and the soldatka made some jesting remark looking at him. Andreyi reddened and still said nothing. When the old master of the house came home drunk, he felt awkward, not knowing where to go to bed. The old woman advised him to go to the threshing-floor. He took his armyak and went. On the evening of that day they quartered two passing soldiers on the Yermilins.



ESSAYS  
AND  
LETTERS



# ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

(January 10, 1902)

## I

**I**N Russia there are missionaries whose duty it is to convert into orthodoxy all who are not orthodox. At the end of 1901 a congress of such missionaries assembled in the town of Orel. Toward the close the *Maréchal de la Noblesse* of the district, Mr. Stakhovitch, uttered a speech in which he proposed that the Congress should recognize the complete liberty of conscience; implying by that term, as he expressed it, "not only liberty of belief, but also liberty of external manifestation, which includes the liberty of falling away from orthodoxy, and even of seducing others into heterodoxy." Mr. Stakhovitch considered that such liberty would only contribute to the triumph and spread of the orthodoxy in which he professed himself a believer.

The members of the Congress did not agree with Mr. Stakhovitch's proposal, and did not even discuss it. Later on an animated discussion and controversy ensued in the newspapers and periodicals as to whether the Orthodox Church should or should not be tolerant. Some — the majority of both the orthodox clergy and the laity — were opposed to tolerance, and recognized for one reason or another the impossibility of abandoning the persecution of the seceding members of the Church. Others — the minority — agreed with Stakhovitch's opinion, approved of him, and demonstrated the desirability and even the necessity for the Church itself of recognizing liberty of conscience.

Those who disagreed with Mr. Stakhovitch claimed

that the Church which gives men eternal welfare cannot but use all the measures at its disposal to save its feeble-minded members from eternal perdition, and that one of these measures is the establishment by the authorities of obstacles to secession from the true Church and to seduction of its members. But above all, they said, the Church which has received from God the power of binding and unbinding always knows what it is about when it employs violence against its enemies; whilst the reasoning of laymen about the justice or injustice of clerical action only demonstrates the error of worldly men in permitting themselves to condemn the actions of the Infallible Church.

Thus said, and are saying, the opponents of religious tolerance; whereas its advocates assert that it is unjust to oppose by force the profession of faiths in disagreement with orthodoxy, and that the distinctions drawn by the opponents of religious tolerance between belief and its external expression have no foundation, as every belief must inevitably be expressed in external actions.

Besides this, said they, for the true Church, which has for its source Christ and his promise that "the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," there can be no danger from the preaching of a small number of heretics or seceders; and the more so that persecutions themselves do not attain their object, as martyrdom only weakens the moral authority of the persecuting Church and increases the strength of the persecuted.

## II

THE supporters of religious tolerance say that the Church should in no cases use violence against its dissenting members and the professors of other faiths. The Church should not use violence! But here the question involuntarily suggests itself: How can the Church use violence?

"*The Christian Church*," according to the definition it assumes itself, "*is a society of men established by God*

*and having for its object the transmission to mankind of the true faith which saves them both in this world and in the world to come."*

How, then, can such a society of men, possessing as its instruments grace and doctrine, desire to and actually commit violence toward those who do not acknowledge its tenets?

To advise the Church not to persecute seceders or those who seduce its members is exactly like recommending an academy of scientists not to have recourse to persecutions, exiles, executions, and so on, of those who disagree with its opinions. An academy of scientists *cannot* desire to do so, and even if it did it could not do these things, as it does not possess the necessary instruments. So also with the Church. The Christian Church, according to its very definition, *cannot* desire to use violence against those who disagree with it, and even if it did so desire, it cannot commit the violence, as it does not possess the necessary instruments. What is the significance, then, of those persecutions which have been committed by the Christian Church since the time of Constantine, which continue yet, and which the supporters of religious tolerance advise the Church to abandon?

### III

MR. STAKHOVITCH, citing in his speech the words of Guizot about the necessity of freedom of conscience in religious teaching, quotes after these good and clear words the bad and confused words of Aksakoff, who substitutes the idea of *Church* for the idea of *Christian Religion*, and having committed this substitution, endeavors to prove the possibility and necessity of tolerance in the Church. But the Christian Religion and the Christian Church are not the same, and we have no right to suppose that what is natural to the Christian Religion is also natural to the Christian Church.

The Christian Religion is the highest consciousness of man of his relation to God to which humanity has

attained, ascending from the lowest to the highest step of religious consciousness. And therefore the Christian Religion, and all men professing the true Christian Religion, knowing that man has attained to a certain degree of clearness and height of religious consciousness, thanks only to the unceasing progress of mankind from darkness to light, cannot be intolerant. Acknowledging themselves in possession only of a certain degree of truth, which continually more and more clarifies itself, rising by the common efforts of humanity, — the professors of the true Christian Religion when meeting beliefs new to them and disagreeing with their own, not only refrain from condemning and rejecting such faiths, but gladly greet, study, reexamine, according to them their own belief, reject what disagrees with reason, accept what clarifies and elevates the truth they profess, and are still more confirmed in what is common to all faiths.

Such is the nature of the Christian Religion in general, and thus act those who profess true Christianity. But not so with the Church. The Church, recognizing itself as the only keeper of the full, divine, eternal, forever unchangeable truth disclosed to men by God Himself, cannot but regard every declaration of religious teaching expressed otherwise than in its own dogmas as a lying, pernicious teaching (even intentionally evil when it proceeds from those who know the tenets of the Church) which draws men into eternal perdition. And therefore, according to its own definition, the Church cannot be tolerant and cannot refrain from using against all expressions and all preachers of faiths which disagree with itself all those means which it regards as in line with its position. So that the Christian Religion and the Christian Church are completely different conceptions. It is true that every Church asserts that it is the only representative of Christianity; but the Christian Religion, that is, the profession of the free Christian Religion, by no means admits that the Church is the representative of Christianity. Adherents to the Christian Religion even cannot do so, as there are many Churches, and each one regards itself as the only vessel



of the complete Divine Truth. It is this confusion of the two different conceptions, continually employed for various purposes by Churchmen, which accounts for the fact that all their arguments about the desirability of tolerance for the Church suffer from a common vagueness, pomposity, incompleteness, and entire want of persuasiveness.

Such are all the arguments about this subject in our country of the Homiakoffs, Samarins, Aksakoffs, and others, and from this same feature does Mr. Stakhovitch's speech suffer. It is all not only empty but also harmful gossip, again blowing incense smoke into the eyes of those who have just begun to free themselves from the deceit.

#### IV

So that the answer to the question: How the Church which defines itself as a society of men having for their object the preaching of the truth, and which has not and cannot have any instruments of violence, can use violence against the faiths which disagree with itself? is simply this: That the institution which calls itself the Christian Church is not a Christian institution, but a secular one; an organization disagreeing with Christianity, and, if anything, inimical to it.

When this thought came to me for the first time I did not believe it (so firmly, from childhood, is the reverence toward the sanctity of the Church instilled into all of us). I at first thought that this was a paradox, that in such a definition of the Church there was some mistake. But the more I examined this question from different sides the more certain it became to me that the definition of the Church as an organization not Christian but inimical to Christianity is an entirely exact definition, without which it is impossible to explain to oneself all those contradictions which are included in the past and present activities of the Church.

And, really, what is the Church? The communicants say that it is a society established by Christ, to which

has been confided the exclusive guardianship and interpretation of the indubitable Divine Truth, guaranteed by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the members of Church; and that this witness of the Holy Ghost is transferred from generation to generation by the laying on of hands established by Christ.

But one need only carefully examine the data by which this is proved to become convinced that all these assertions are quite arbitrary.

Those two texts (in those writings which the Church regards as sacred), upon which rest the proofs of the establishment of the Church by Christ Himself, have not at all the meaning attributed to them. And by no means can they signify the establishment of the Church, as the very idea of "the Church" at the time of the writing of the Gospels, and still more at the time of Christ, did not even exist.

The third text upon which the exclusive right of the Church to teach divine truth is apt to be founded — the concluding verses of Mark and Matthew — are recognized as forgeries by all the experts of the Gospel manuscripts.

Even less can it be proved that the descent of the fiery tongues on the heads of the disciples, seen only by the disciples, demonstrates that all which was to be said, not only by these disciples, but also by all on whom they were to lay their hands, is said by God (that is, by the Holy Ghost), and therefore is an eternally unquestionable truth.

But, above all, even if this were proved (which is quite impossible), even then there is no possibility of proving that this gift of infallibility exists precisely in that Church which asserts it of itself. The chief and insoluble difficulty is that the Church is not One, and that every Church asserts that It alone is in the truth and all the others in error. So that, as a matter of fact, the assertion of each Church that it alone is in the truth has exactly as much weight as the assertion of any man who swears, "By God, I am right, and all who disagree with me are wrong."

"By God, we alone compose the true Church" — in this, and this alone, consists all the proof of the infallibility of any Church. Such a basis, while being both very unstable and false, has besides this defect, that, excluding all verification of anything preached by a Church claiming infallibility for itself, it opens a limitless field for every kind of the strangest fantasies taught as the truth. And when irrational and fantastic assertions are taught as the truth, then there naturally appear men who protest against such assertions. And in order to compel people to believe in irrational and fantastic assertions there is but one means — coercion.

The whole of the Nicene Creed is a network of irrational and fantastic assertions which could arise only amongst men who recognized themselves as infallible, and could spread only by compulsion.

"God the Father gave birth before Time to God the Son, from whom all emanated. This Son was sent into the world for the salvation of men, and there he was again born from a virgin, and was crucified, and arose, and ascended into heaven, where he is now sitting on the right hand of the Father. And at the end of the world this Son will come to judge the living and the dead;" — and all this is an indisputable truth revealed by God Himself!

If we in the twentieth century cannot accept all these dogmas, contrary both to common sense and human knowledge, so also in the time of the Nicene Creed people were not deprived of common sense and could not agree with all these strange dogmas; and they expressed their disagreement with them. And the Church, regarding itself in the sole possession of the full truth, could not admit this disagreement, and naturally used the most peremptory means against this denial and its diffusion — coercion. Admitting the use of violence in certain cases, as, for instance, in war and punishments, the Church naturally regarded as even more permissible and lawful the use of violence against

men who by their false teaching thrust others into eternal perdition.

The Church, united to power, has always used violence — concealed violence, but nevertheless most decided and effective. It gathered taxes from every one by violence without inquiring whether they agreed or not with the established faith, but demanding of all its profession.

Having this money collected by coercion it organized with it a most powerful instrument of hypnotism for the purpose of establishing amongst children and adults its own faith alone. And when this instrument was not sufficient it used its power to coerce directly. So that in a Church supported by the State there can be no mention of religious tolerance.

And this cannot be otherwise while Churches are Churches.

It will be said that Churches like the Quakers, Wesleyans, Shakers, Mormons, and at the present time especially Roman Catholics, collect money from their members without using the power of coercion, and therefore do not use violence to support themselves. But this is incorrect: the money collected by wealthy people, and especially by Roman Catholic congregations during ages of paid hypnotism, are not free gifts of their members, but result from coercion in its crudest form. Money is always collected by the aid of coercion and is always the tool of coercion. Before a Church can regard itself as tolerant it must be free from all monetary influence. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

## V

THE Church, as a matter of fact, does *not* possess instruments of violence. Violence, if it is used, is used not by the Church itself, but by the power with which the Church is united. And therefore the question arises: Why do the Governments and ruling

classes support the Church? It would seem that the beliefs preached by the Church ought to be indifferent to the Governments and the ruling classes. It would seem that it ought to be just the same to the Governments and ruling classes whatever the peoples they govern believe: whether they are Protestants, Catholics, Greek-Orthodox, Mohammedan. But this is not so. In all times religious beliefs correspond to the social organization; that is, social organization develops according to religious beliefs. And therefore: As the religious belief of the peoples, so is the social organization. This the Governments and ruling classes know, and therefore they always support that religious teaching which corresponds to their advantageous position. The Governments and ruling classes know that the true Christian religion repudiates power founded on violence, repudiates the distinction of classes, the accumulation of riches, executions, wars — all by which the Governments and ruling classes occupy their advantageous position. Therefore they find it necessary to support that faith which justifies their position. And Christianity, perverted by the Churches, does this, and in addition affords the advantage that, having perverted *true* Christianity, it conceals from men the approach to it.

The Governments and ruling classes could not exist without the perversion of Christianity, which is called the Church Faith. The Church with its deceit could not exist without the help of direct or indirect coercion on the part of the Governments and the ruling classes. In some states this coercion shows itself in persecutions, in others in the exclusive patronage by the wealthy ruling classes. And the possession of riches is possible only by violence. And therefore the Church and the Governments and the ruling classes mutually uphold each other. So that the opponents of religious tolerance are quite right in defending violence and persecution, upon which depends the existence of the Church. While the advocates of tolerance would be right only if they applied not to the Church but to the

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State, and demanded what is incorrectly termed *the separation of Church from State*, but which in reality is only the cessation of the exclusive Governmental support by direct violence or indirectly by subsidizing any one particular faith.

But to demand from the Church that it should abandon coercion in any form whatever is like demanding of a foe besieged on all sides that he should disarm and give himself up into the hands of his enemies.

Only true, free Christianity, untrammelled by any worldly institutions, and therefore afraid of nothing and no one, and having for its aim only the greater and greater knowledge of the divine truth and its greater and greater realization in life, can be tolerant

# “NOTES FOR OFFICERS”

(December 20, 1901)

“It is impossible but that offenses will come, but woe unto him through whom they come.” — LUKE XVII. 1, 2.

IN all Russian barracks there hang, nailed to the wall, the so-called “Notes for Soldiers”<sup>1</sup> composed by General Dragomiroff. These notes are a collection of stupidly braggart sentences intermixed with blasphemous citations from the Gospels, and written in an artificial barrack slang, which is, in reality, quite strange to every soldier. The Gospel citations are quoted in order to corroborate the statements that soldiers should kill and tear with their teeth the enemy: “If your bayonet breaks, strike with your fists; if your fists give way, bite with your teeth.” The notes conclude with the statement that God is the soldiers’ General: “God is your General.”

Nothing illustrates more convincingly than these notes that terrible degree of unenlightenment, servile submissiveness, and brutality which Russian men have attained to at present. Since this most horrible blasphemy appeared and was first hung up in all the barracks (a considerable time ago), not one commander, nor priest — whom this distortion of the meaning of the Gospel texts would seem to concern directly — has expressed any condemnation of this obnoxious work, and it continues to be published in millions of copies and to be read by millions of soldiers who accept this dreadful production as a guide to their conduct.

These notes revolted me long ago, and now, being

<sup>1</sup> “Notes for Soldiers” (Soldatskaya Pamiatka), by General Dragomiroff, 19th ed. See p. 73. — EDS.

afraid I may otherwise miss the opportunity of doing so before my death, I have now written an appeal to soldiers,<sup>1</sup> in which I have endeavored to remind them that as men and Christians they have quite other duties toward God than those put forward in the notes. And a similar reminder is required, I think, not only by soldiers, but still more so by officers (by “officers” I mean all military authorities, from Subalterns to Generals), who enter the military service or continue in it, not by compulsion as privates do, but by their own free will. It was pardonable a hundred or fifty years ago, when war was regarded as an inevitable condition of the life of nations, when the men of the country with whom one was at war were regarded as barbarians, without religion, and evil-doers, and when it did not enter the mind of military men that they were required for the suppression and “pacification” of one’s own people, —it was pardonable then to put on a multi-colored uniform trimmed with gold braid and to saunter about with a clashing sword and jingling spurs, or to caracole in front of one’s regiment, imagining oneself a hero, who, if he has not yet sacrificed his life for the defense of his fatherland, is nevertheless ready to do so. But at the present time, when frequent international communications, commercial, social, scientific, artistic, have so brought nations in touch with one another that any contemporary international war is like a dispute in a family, and breaks the most sacred human ties, —when hundreds of peace societies and thousands of articles, not only in special but also in the ordinary newspapers, unceasingly demonstrate from every side the senselessness of militarism, and the possibility, even necessity, of abolishing war; —at the present time, when, above all, the military are more and more often called out, not against foreign foes to repel invasions, or for the aggrandizement of the glory and power of their country, but against unarmed factory workmen or peasants, —at the present time to caracole on one’s

<sup>1</sup> See p. 67. — Eds.



little horse in one's little embroidered uniform and to advance dashingly at the head of one's company, is no longer a silly, pardonable piece of vanity as it was before, but something quite different.

In past times, in the days say of Nicholas I., it entered into no one's head that troops are necessary chiefly to shoot at unarmed populaces. But at present troops are permanently stationed in every large town and manufacturing centre for the purpose of being ready to disperse gatherings of workmen; and seldom a month passes without soldiers being called out of their barracks with ball cartridges and hidden in secret places in readiness to shoot the populace down at any moment.

The use of troops against the people has become indeed not only customary,—they are mobilized in advance to be in readiness for this very purpose; and the Governments do not conceal the fact that the distribution of recruits in the various regiments is intentionally conducted in such a way that the men are never drafted into a regiment stationed in the place from which they are drawn. This is done for the purpose of avoiding the possibility of soldiers having to shoot at their own relations.

The German Emperor, at every fresh call for recruits, has openly declared and still declares that soldiers who have been sworn in belong to him, body and soul; that they have only one foe—his foe; and that this foe are the Socialists (that is, workmen), whom the soldiers must, if he bids them, shoot down (*niederschieszen*), even if they should be their own brothers or even parents.

In past times, moreover, if the troops were used against the people, those against whom they were used were, or at all events were supposed to be, evil-doers, ready to kill and ruin the peaceful inhabitants, and whom therefore it might be supposed to be necessary to destroy for the general good. But at present every one knows that those against whom troops are called out are for the most part peaceful, industrious men, who merely desire to profit unhindered by the fruits of their labors. So that the principal permanent function of

the troops in our time no longer consists in an imaginary defense against irreligious and in general external foes, and not against internal foes in the persons of riotous evil-doers, but in killing one's own unarmed brothers, who are by no means evil-doers, but peaceful, industrious men whose only desire is that they shall not be deprived of their earnings. So that military service at the present time, when its chief object is, by murder and the threat of murder, to keep enslaved men in those unjust conditions in which they are placed, is not only not a noble but a positively dastardly undertaking. And therefore it is indispensable that officers who serve at the present time should consider whom they serve, and ask themselves whether what they are doing is good or evil.

I know that there are many officers, especially of the higher grades, who by various arguments on the themes of orthodoxy, autocracy, integrity of the State, eternal inevitableness of war, necessity of order, inconsistency of socialistic ravings, and so on, try to prove to themselves that their activity is rational and useful, and contains nothing immoral. But in the depths of their soul they themselves do not believe in what they say, and the more intelligent and the older they become the less they believe.

I remember how joyously I was struck by a friend and old comrade of mine, a very ambitious man, who had dedicated his whole life to the military service, and had attained the highest honors and grades (General Aides-de-Camp and Major-General), when he told me that he had burnt his "Memoirs" of the wars in which he had participated because he had changed his view of the military activity, and now regarded every war as an evil deed, which should not be encouraged by participation, but, on the contrary, should be discredited in every way. Many officers think the same, although they do not say so while they serve. And indeed no thoughtful officer can think otherwise. Why, one has only to recall to mind what forms the occupation of all officers, from the lowest to the highest—to the Commandant of an Army Corps. From the beginning to the end of their

service — I am alluding to officers in the active service — their activity, with the exception of the few and short periods when they go to war and are occupied with actual murder, consists in the attainment of two aims: in teaching soldiers the best methods of killing men, and in accustoming them to an obedience which enables them to do mechanically, without argument, everything their commander orders. In olden times it used to be said, “Flog two to death, and train one,” and so they did. If at present the proportion of flogged to death is smaller, the principle nevertheless is the same. One cannot reduce men into that state, not of animals but of machines, in which they will commit the deed most repulsive to the nature of man and to the faith he professes, namely, murder, at the bidding of any commander, — unless not only artful frauds but also the most cruel violence have been perpetrated on them. And so it is in practice.

Not long ago a great sensation was created in the French press by the disclosure by a journalist of those awful tortures to which soldiers in the Disciplinary Battalions are submitted on the Island of Obrou, six hours’ distance from Paris. The men punished have their hands and feet tied together behind their back and are then thrown to the ground; instruments are fixed on their thumbs while their hands are twisted behind their backs, and screwed up so that every movement produces a dreadful pain; they are hung with their legs upward; and so forth.

When we see trained animals accomplishing things contrary to nature: dogs walking on their fore legs, elephants rolling barrels, tigers playing with lions, and so on, we know that all this has been attained by the torments of hunger, whip, and red-hot iron. And when we see men in uniforms with rifles standing motionless, or performing all together the same movement, — running, jumping, shooting, shouting, and so on, — in general, producing those fine reviews and manœuvres which emperors and kings so admire and show off one before the other, we know the same. One cannot cauterize

out of a man all that is human and reduce him to the state of a machine without torturing him, and torturing not in a simple way but in the most refined, cruel way, — at one and the same time torturing and deceiving him.

And all this is done by you officers. In this all your service consists, from the highest grade to the lowest, with the exception of those rare occasions when you participate in real war.

A youth transported from his family to the other end of the world comes to you, after having been taught that that deceptive oath forbidden by the Gospel which he has taken irretrievably binds him, — as a cock when laid on the floor with a line drawn over its nose and along the floor thinks that it is bound by that line, — he comes to you with complete submissiveness and the hope that you his elders, men more intelligent and learned than he, will teach him all that is good. And you, instead of freeing him from those superstitions which he has brought with him, inoculate him with new, most senseless, coarse, and pernicious superstitions: about the sanctity of the banner, the almost divine position of the Tsar, the duty of absolute obedience to the authorities. And when with the help of the methods for stupefying men which are elaborated in your organization you reduce him to a position worse than animal, to a position where he is ready to kill every one he is ordered to kill, even his unarmed brothers, you exhibit him with pride to your superiors, and receive in return their thanks and rewards. It is terrible to be a murderer oneself, but by cunning and cruel methods to reduce one's confiding brothers to this state is the most terrible crime of all. And this you accomplish, and in this consists the whole of your service.

It is therefore not astonishing that amongst you more than amongst any other class everything which will stifle conscience flourishes: smoking, cards, drunkenness, depravity; and that suicides occur amongst you more frequently than anywhere else.

"It is impossible but that offenses will come, but woe unto him through whom they come."

You often say that you serve because if you did not the existing order would be destroyed and disturbances and every kind of calamities would occur.

But firstly, it is not true that you are concerned with the maintenance of the existing order: you are concerned only with your own advantages.

Secondly, even if your abstinence from military service did destroy the existing order, this would in no way prove that you should continue to do what is wrong, but only that the order which is being destroyed by your abstinence should be destroyed. Were establishments of the most useful kind—hospitals, schools, homes, to depend for their support on the profits from houses of ill-fame, no consideration of the good produced by these philanthropic establishments would retain in her position the woman who desired to free herself from her shameful trade.

"It is not my fault," the woman would say, "that you have founded your philanthropic institutions on vice. I no longer wish to live in vice. As to your institutions, they do not concern me." And so should every soldier say if the necessity of maintaining the existing order founded on his readiness to murder were put before him. "Organize the general order in a way that will not require murder," the soldier should say. "And then I shall not destroy it. I only do not wish to and cannot be a murderer."

Many of you say also: "I was educated thus. I am tied by my position, and cannot escape." But this also is not true.

You can always escape from your position. If, however, you do not, it is only because you prefer to live and act against your conscience rather than lose certain worldly advantages which your dishonest service affords. Only forget that you are an officer and recall to mind that you are a man, and the way of escape from your position will immediately disclose itself to you. This way of escape in its best and most honest form would consist in your calling together the men of whom you are in command,

stepping in front, and asking their pardon for all the evil you have done them by deception — and then cease to serve in the army. Such an action seems very bold, demanding great courage, whereas in reality much less courage is required for such an action than to storm a fortification or to challenge a man to a duel for an insult to the uniform, — which you as a soldier are always ready to do, and do.

But even without being capable of acting thus you can always, if you have understood the criminality of military service, leave it and give preference to any other activity though less advantageous.

But if you cannot do even this, then the solution for you of the question whether you will continue to serve or not will be postponed to that time — and this will soon appear for each one of you — when you will stand face to face with an unarmed crowd of peasants or factory workers, and be ordered to shoot at them. And then, if anything human remains in you, you will have to refuse to obey, and, as a result, to leave the service.

I know that there are still many officers, from the highest to the lowest ranks, who are so unenlightened or hypnotized that they do not see the necessity of either the one, the other, or the third solution, and quietly continue to serve even in the present conditions, ready to shoot at their brothers and even priding themselves upon this; but happily public opinion punishes such people with more and more repulsion and disapproval, and their number continually becomes smaller and smaller.

So that in our time, when the fratricidal function of the army has become evident, officers not only can no longer continue in the ancient traditions of military self-complacent bravado, — they cannot continue the criminal work of teaching murder to simple men confiding in them, and themselves to prepare for participation in murdering unarmed populaces, without the consciousness of their human degradation and shame.

It is this which should be understood and remembered by every thinking and conscientious officer of our time.

# "NOTES FOR SOLDIERS"

(December 20, 1901)

"Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body."

— MATT. x. 28.

"We must obey God rather than men." — ACTS v. 29.

YOU are a soldier. You have been taught to shoot, to stab, to march, to do gymnastics. You have been taught to read and write, led to exercises and reviews; perhaps have been in a campaign and have fought with the Turks or Chinese, obeying all your orders. It has not even entered your head to ask yourself whether what you were ordered to do was good or bad.

But suddenly an order is received that your company or squadron shall march out, taking ball cartridges. You go without asking where you are being led.

You are brought to a village or factory, and you see before you gathered in an open space a crowd of villagers or factory hands, — men, women with children, aged folk. The governor and public prosecutor approach the crowd with policemen and say something. The crowd is at first silent, then begins to shout louder and louder; and the authorities retreat. And you guess that the peasants or factory hands are rioting, and that you have been brought to "pacify" them. The authorities several times retreat from the crowd and again approach it, but the shouts become louder and louder, and the authorities consult each other and at last give you the order to load your rifles with the ball cartridges. You see before you men such as those from amongst whom you have been taken, — men in peasants' coats, sheepskin overcoats, and bark shoes, and women in kerchiefs and jackets, — women like your wife and mother.

The first shot is ordered to be fired above the heads

of the crowd. But the crowd does not disperse, and shouts even louder; and you are then ordered to shoot in earnest, not over the heads, but straight into the middle, of the crowd.

It has been instilled into you that you are not responsible for the consequences of your shots. But you know that the man who falls bleeding from your shot is killed by you and by no one else, and you know that you could have refrained from shooting and that then the man would not have been killed.

What are you to do?

It would not be enough to lay down your rifle and refuse in this instance to shoot your brothers; for tomorrow the same thing could reoccur. And therefore, whether you wish it or not, you have to recollect yourselves and ask, "What is this soldier's calling which has brought me to the necessity of shooting my unarmed brothers?"

You are told in the Gospel that one should not only refrain from killing his brothers, but should not do that which leads to murder: one should not be angry with one's brothers, nor hate one's enemies, but love them.

In the law of Moses you are distinctly told, "Thou shalt not kill," without any reservations as to whom you can and whom you cannot kill. Whereas in the regulations which you have been taught you are told that a soldier must fulfil any order whatsoever of his superior, except an order against the Tsar; and in explanation of the Sixth Commandment you are told that although by this commandment killing is forbidden, yet he who kills an enemy during war does not sin against this commandment.<sup>1</sup> And in the "Notes for Soldiers" which hang in your barracks, and which you have many times read and listened to, it is explained how a soldier should kill men: "If three fall on you, shoot one, stab another, and

<sup>1</sup>In your regulations you are told: "By the Sixth Commandment God forbids the taking of man's life by violence or cunning, and the disturbance in any way of one's neighbor's peace and safety; and therefore this commandment also forbids quarrels, anger, hatred, jealousy, cruelty. But he who kills the enemy in war does not sin against the Sixth Commandment, because in war we defend our faith, sovereign, and country."



finish the third with the bayonet. . . . If your bayonet breaks, strike with the stock; if the stock gives way, hit with your fists; if your fists are hurt, bite with your teeth.”

You are told that you must kill, because you have taken the oath, and that not you but your commanders will be responsible for your actions.

But before you took the oath, that is, before you promised men to obey their will, it was your duty, without need of oaths, to obey in everything the will of God, of Him who gave you life; and God forbids killing.

So that you could by no means swear that you would obey everything men might command. This is why it is distinctly stated in the Gospel, Matt. v. 34-37: “Swear not at all . . . But let your speech be, Yea, yea; nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.”

And in the Epistle of James, chap. v. 12, the same thing is said, “But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth.” So that to take the oath is a sin. As to what they say about your commanders, not yourselves, being responsible for your deeds, this is obviously a falsehood. Is your conscience not in you, but in your sergeant, captain, colonel, or some one else? No one can decide for you what you can and must, and what you cannot and should not do. And a man is always responsible for what he does. Is not the sin of adultery much easier than that of murder? and yet can one man say to another: “Go and commit adultery. I shall bear your sin, because I am your commander”?

According to the Biblical narrative Adam sinned against God, and then said that his wife told him to eat the apple, while his wife said she was tempted by the devil. God exonerated neither Adam nor Eve, but told them that because Adam listened to the voice of his wife he would be punished, and that his wife would be punished for listening to the serpent. And neither were excused, but both were punished. Will not God say the same to you also when you kill a man and say that your captain ordered you to do it?

The deceit is apparent already, because in the regu

lation obliging a soldier to obey all his commander's orders, these words are added, "*Except such as tend toward the injury of the Tsar.*"

If a soldier before obeying the orders of his commander must first decide whether it is not against the Tsar, how then can he fail to consider before obeying his commander's order whether it is not against his supreme King, God? And no action is more opposed to the will of God than that of killing men. And therefore you *cannot* obey men if they order you to kill. If you obey, and kill, you do so only for the sake of your own advantage, — to escape punishment. So that in killing by order of your commander you are a murderer as much as the thief who kills a rich man to rob him. He is tempted by money, and you by the desire not to be punished, or to receive a reward. Man is always responsible before God for his actions. And no power, whatever the authorities desire, can turn a live man into a dead thing which one can move about as one likes. Christ taught men that they are all sons of God, and therefore a Christian cannot surrender his conscience into the power of another man, no matter by what title he may be called: King, Tsar, Emperor. As to those men who have assumed power over you, demanding of you the murder of your brothers, this only shows that they are deceivers, and that therefore one should not obey them. Shameful is the position of the prostitute who is always ready to give her body to be defiled by any one her master indicates; but yet more shameful is the position of a soldier always ready for the greatest of crimes — the murder of any man whom his commander indicates.

And therefore if you do indeed desire to act according to God's will you have only to do one thing — to throw off the shameful and ungodly calling of a soldier, and be ready to bear any sufferings which may be inflicted upon you for so doing.

So that the true "Notes" for a Christian Soldier are not those in which it is said that "God is the Soldiers' General" and other blasphemies, and that the

soldier must obey his commanders in everything, and be ready to kill foreigners and even his own unarmed brothers, — but those which remind one of the words of the Gospel that one *should obey God rather than men* and fear not those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

In this alone consists the true, unfraudulent "Notes for Soldiers."

In Dragomiroff's "Notes for Soldiers" three passages are quoted from the Gospels: John xv. 10-13 and Matthew x. 22, 39. From John the words of the 13th verse are quoted: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" evidently for the purpose of implying that soldiers fighting in battle should defend their comrades to the utmost of their strength.

These words however cannot possibly refer to military action, but mean exactly the reverse. In verses 10-13 it is said: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

So that the words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," do not at all mean that a soldier should defend his comrades, but that a Christian should be ready to surrender his life for the fulfilment of Christ's commandment that men should love one another. And therefore he should be ready to sacrifice his life rather than consent to kill men.

From Matthew the end of the 22d verse of the 10th chapter is quoted, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved," evidently in the sense that a soldier who fights bravely will be saved from the enemy. But again the meaning of this passage is not at all what the compiler wishes to attribute to it, but a contrary one.

The complete verse is : " And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake : but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

So that obviously this verse cannot relate to soldiers, soldiers not being hated by any one for Christ's name : and it is clear therefore that only those people can be hated for Christ's name who refuse in his name to do what the world demands of them, and, in the case in point, soldiers who disobey when murder is demanded of them.

Again, the end of the 39th verse of the 10th chapter of Matthew is quoted : " He that loseth his life shall find it," also in the sense that he who is killed in war will be rewarded in Heaven. But the sense is obviously not this. In the 38th verse it is said, " He that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me," and after this is added, " He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;" that is, that he who desires to safeguard his corporal life rather than fulfil the teaching of love will lose his true life, but he who does not safeguard his corporal life, but fulfils the teaching of love, will gain the true, spiritual, eternal life.

Thus all the three passages assert, not, as the compiler desired, that in obedience to the Authorities one should fight, and crush, and rend men with one's teeth, but, on the contrary, they all, like the whole Gospel, express one and the same thing, — that a Christian cannot be a murderer and therefore cannot be a soldier. And therefore the words, " A soldier is Christ's warrior," placed in the " Notes " after the Gospel verses, do not at all mean what the compiler imagines. It is true that a soldier, if he be a Christian, can and should be Christ's warrior, but he will be Christ's warrior, not when, obeying the will of those commanders who have prepared him for murder, he kills foreigners who have done him no harm, or even his own unarmed fellow-countrymen, but only when he renounces the ungodly and shameful calling of a soldier, in the name of Christ, — and fights not with external foes but with his own commanders

who deceive him and his brothers, and fights them, not with a bayonet, nor with his fists or teeth, but with humble reasonableness and readiness to bear all suffering and even death rather than remain a soldier, — that is, a man ready to kill any one whom his commanders indicate.

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[The following are the "Notes for Soldiers" by General Dragomiroff to which Tolstoy alludes. — EDS.]

"NOTES FOR SOLDIERS" (SOLDATSKAYA PAMIATKA),  
BY GENERAL DRAGOMIROFF

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." — JOHN xv. 13.

"He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." — MATT. x. 2.

"He that loseth his life shall find it." — MATT. x. 39.

A SOLDIER is Christ's warrior. As such he should regard himself, and so he should behave.

Consider your corps as your family; your commander as your father; your comrade as your brother; your inferior as a young relative. Then all will be happy and friendly and easy.

Don't think of yourself, think of your comrades; they will think of you. Perish yourself, but save your comrade.

Under fire advance in open order; attack together.

Strike with your fist, not with your open hand.

One leg helps the other, one hand strengthens the other. Stick together. One evil is not an evil; two evils are half an evil; separation is the evil.

Don't expect relief. It won't come. Support will come. When you've thrashed them well, then you'll rest.

Only he is beaten who is afraid.

Always attack, never defend.

If your bayonet breaks, strike with the stock; if the stock gives way, hit with your fists; if your fists are hurt, bite with your teeth. Only he wins who fights desperately, to the death.

In action a soldier is like a sentinel; even dying he should not let his rifle go.

Keep your bullet for three days, even for a whole campaign, when you can't get more. Shoot seldom, but well. With the bayonet strike hard. The bullet may miss the mark, but the bayonet will not. The bullet is stupid, the bayonet is the plucky one.

Aim every bullet; to shoot without care only amuses the devil. Only the careful not the chance bullet finds the culprit. Hold your cartridges. If you spend them a long way off, when you get near, just when you want them, you'll have none. For a good soldier, thirty cartridges are enough for the hottest engagement.

From the dead and wounded take their cartridges.

If you knock up against the enemy unexpectedly or he against you, hit without hesitation. Don't let him collect himself. The plucky one is he who first cries "Hurrah." If three fall on you, shoot one, stab another, and finish the third with your bayonet. God defends the brave.

Where a bold one will get through, God will trip up the timid one.

For a good soldier there are neither flanks nor rear, but all is front, where the foe is.

Always keep your face toward the cavalry. Let it come to two hundred yards, give it a volley, put the bayonet into position, and freeze there.

In war a soldier must expect short commons, short sleep, and sore feet. Because it is war. Even an old soldier finds it difficult, and for a green one it is hard. But if it's hard for you it isn't easier for the enemy; maybe harder still. Only you see your own hardships, but don't see the enemy's. Yet they are always there. So don't grow stale, but the harder it is, the more doggedly and desperately fight; when you've won you'll feel better at once, and the enemy worse. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

Don't think that victory can be won straight off. The enemy can also be firm. Sometimes one can't succeed even the second and third times. Go at it a fourth, a fifth, a sixth time, till you win.

When fighting help the sound men. Only think of

the wounded when you have won. The man who bothers about the wounded during the fight and leaves the ranks is a bad soldier and not a kind-hearted man. It is not his comrades who are dear to him but his own skin. If you win it will be well for all, both sound and wounded.

Don't leave your place on the march. If you stop for a minute and fall behind, hurry up and don't lag.

When you reach the bivouac all can't rest. Some must sleep, others guard. He who sleeps, let him sleep in peace till he is wakened; comrades are on guard. He who is on guard, let him watch alertly, though he has marched seventy miles.

When you are an officer, keep your men well in hand. Give your orders intelligently; don't merely cry "Forward, March." First explain what is to be done, so that every man can know where and why he has to go. Then "Forward, March" is all right. Every soldier should understand his actions.

"The chief gets the drink first, and the stick first."

Die for the Orthodox faith, for our father the Tsar, for Holy Russia. The Church prays to God. "He who loses his life will find it." He who survives, to him honor and glory.

Do not offend the native; he feeds and supports. A soldier is not a thief.

Keep yourself clean, your clothes and ammunition in order. Guard your rifle, your biscuits, and your feet as the apple of your eye. Look after your socks (leg bands) and keep them greased. It's better for the foot.

A soldier should be healthy, brave, hardy, determined, just, pious! Pray to God! From Him is the victory! Noble heroes, God leads you, He is your General!

Obedience, education, discipline, cleanliness, health, tidiness, vigor, courage, dash, victory! Glory, glory, glory!

Lord of Hosts, be with us! We have no other helper than Thee in the day of our trouble! Lord of Hosts have mercy on us!

# TRUE CRITICISM

(A PREFACE TO A RUSSIAN EDITION OF THE GERMAN NOVEL, "DER BÜTNERBAUER," BY VON POLENZ)

(1901)

LAST year a friend of mine in whose taste I have confidence gave me to read the German novel "Der Bütnerbauer" by Von Polenz. I read it and was surprised that such a work, having appeared two years ago, was known to hardly any one.

This novel is not one of those imitations of artistic work which are produced in such enormous quantities to-day, but a genuine work of art. It belongs neither to those descriptions, devoid of all interest, of persons and events brought into artificial connection merely because the author, having acquired command of the technique of artistic descriptions, desires to write a new novel; nor to those dissertations on a given theme, clothed in the form of drama or novel, which are also palmed off on the public to-day as artistic productions; nor yet does it belong to those other productions called decadent, which especially attract the modern public owing to the fact that they resemble the ravings of a madman, and present a kind of puzzle, the solution of which affords a pleasant occupation and is at the same time regarded as evidence of refinement.

This novel does not belong to either of these three classes: it is a true artistic production in which the author says what he has to say because he loves the subject of which he is speaking; and he expresses himself, not in arguments nor in cloudy allegories, but in the only way in which one can transmit an artistic sub-



himself upon her, catches her by the hair, and demands his money.

"I won't give it up for anything!" she repeats in answer to his demands, endeavoring to free herself from him.

Then, losing his head completely, he strikes her at random.

"I will die before I give it up," she says.

"But you shall," he shouts, knocking her off her feet and falling down upon her himself, continuing to claim his money. Receiving no answer, in his insane drunken malice he wants to strangle her. But the sight of blood oozing from beneath her hair and trickling down her forehead and nose arrests him. He is afraid of what he has done, leaves her on the floor, staggers to his bed, and falls down upon it.

The scene is truthful and terrible. But the author loves his characters, and adds one little detail which suddenly illuminates the whole with so bright a ray of light that it forces the reader not only to pity but to love these people, notwithstanding all their coarseness and cruelty. The stricken wife comes to herself, gets up from the floor, wipes the blood from her forehead with a corner of her dress, opens the door, quietens her screaming children, and then looks round for her husband. He is lying on the bed as he fell, but his head is hanging down the side and the blood is rushing into it. The wife approaches him and carefully lifts his head, lays it on the pillow, and then rearranges her dress and disentangles from her head a handful of hair which her husband had torn out.

Dozens of pages of argument could not convey what is expressed in this detail.

Here is revealed to the reader at one and the same time both the consciousness, educated by tradition, of wifely duty, and the triumph of a maintained resolution not to surrender money necessary, not for herself, but for the family. Here we have both injury and forgiveness, pity, and, if not love, the recollection of love toward one's husband, the father of one's children. But more

than this. Such a detail, illuminating the inner life of this wife and this husband, throws a light for the reader upon the inner life of millions of similar husbands and wives, both of those who lived before, and who live now. It calls forth not only respect and love toward these men and women, crushed by labor, but also forces one to reflect on the reason why such people, strong in body and spirit, with such possibilities of a good and loving life, are so neglected, downtrodden, and unenlightened.

And such true artistic features, produced only by love toward the subject of which the author writes, are to be met with in every chapter of this book.

This novel is undoubtedly a fine work of art, as every one who reads it will agree, and yet although it appeared nearly three years ago and although a translation was published in one of our best Russian periodicals, it has passed quite unnoticed both in Russia and Germany. I have inquired about this book of several German literary men I have met lately; they had heard the name of Polenz but had not read his novel, although they had all read Zola's last novels and Kipling's stories and Ibsen's dramas, and D'Annuncio, and even Maeterlinck.

Twenty years ago Matthew Arnold wrote an excellent article about the object of criticism. In his opinion the object of criticism consists in finding what is most important and good amidst all that has been written in any place and at any time, and in drawing the attention of readers to this important and good.

Such a criticism, in our day, when people are being drowned in a flood of newspapers, journals, books, and the development of the art of advertising, appear to me not only necessary—the whole future of the enlightenment of the cultured class of our European world even depends upon whether such a criticism will appear and become authoritative.

The overproduction of any article is harmful; but the overproduction of articles which represent not an end but a means is especially harmful, when this means is regarded as an end.

Horses and carriages as means of locomotion, houses

and clothes as means of shelter, good food as the means of maintaining the strength of one's organism, are all very useful. But as soon as people begin to regard the possession of such means as ends in themselves, believing it good to have as many horses, houses, clothes, and foods as possible, — then these things become not only not useful but distinctly harmful. So it has happened with the production of books in the well-to-do circle of our European society. For a long time past, in the well-to-do circle, the publication of books, which is undoubtedly useful for the great insufficiently educated masses, has been the chief organ for the dissemination of ignorance, and not of enlightenment.

It is very easy to become convinced of this. In our day, books, magazines, and especially newspapers have become great financial undertakings, for the success of which the greatest possible number of consumers is necessary. The interests and tastes of the majority of consumers being always low and coarse, it is necessary, to secure success, that the literary productions shall be concerned with low interests and correspond to low tastes; that is, shall meet the demands of the majority. And the press completely satisfies these demands, which it has the full possibility of doing, as amongst its workers there are always many more with the same low interests and coarse tastes as the public, than with lofty interests and refined tastes. And as these individuals receive ample remuneration for the works they supply to meet the tastes of the masses, owing to the development of book-printing and the new methods of speculating in magazines, newspapers, and books, — that terrible and ever increasing flood of printed paper has appeared which by its volume alone, to say nothing of its contents, presents an immense obstacle to enlightenment.

If, in our day, an intelligent young man from the ranks who wished to educate himself were to obtain access to all the books, journals, and newspapers, and left to himself to choose his reading, then all the chances are that, reading incessantly every day for ten years,

he would read only silly and immoral books. To come across a good book would be for him as improbable as to find a marked pea in a sackful. And the worst of it is that, continually reading bad works, his tastes and understanding would continually become more perverted, so that when he did light on a good work he would either not understand it at all, or misunderstand it.

Besides this, thanks to the eventualities and the skill of modern advertising, some poor works (such for instance as "The Christian," by Hall Caine, a novel false in its subject, and inartistic, which was purchased in enormous quantities) attain, like "Odol" and Pears' Soap, reputations unjustified by their merits. These great reputations continually force a greater number of people to read such books. And while the reputation of insignificant, often harmful, books continually increases like a snowball, a similar snowball, of greater and greater confusion of ideas, and an utter incapacity of understanding the merits of literary works, continually accumulates in the heads of the great majority of men. Therefore, in proportion to the greater and greater circulation of newspapers, magazines, and books, that is to say in general of the increase of book-printing, the level of merit descends lower and lower, and the great mass of the so-called educated public becomes deeper and deeper immersed in the most hopeless, self-complacent, and therefore incurable, ignorance.

In my memory, during the last fifty years, a striking degradation of the taste and common sense of the reading public has taken place. One can see this degradation in all the fields of literature, but I will indicate only a few of the most marked examples known to me. In Russian poetry, for instance, after Pushkin, Lermontoff (Tutcheff is generally forgotten), poetic reputation passed first to the very doubtful poets, Maikoff, Polonsky, Fet; then to Nekrassoff, altogether devoid of poetic talent; then to the artificial and prosaic rhymester Alexis Tolstoy; then to the monotonous and weak Nadson; then to the completely giftless Apouhtin; and

then everything is muddled, and rhymesters appear whose name is legion, who do not know what poetry is, what is the meaning of their writings, nor why they write.

Another striking example is that of the English prose writers: From the great Dickens one descends first to George Eliot, then to Thackeray, from Thackeray to Trollope, and after that begin the indifferent fabrications of Collins, Kiplings, Rider Haggards, and so on. The same, in a yet more striking way, is seen in American literature: after the great Pleiad of Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Whittier, and others, there is a sudden break, and beautiful editions with beautiful illustrations appear, containing stories and novels which it is impossible to read for the want of any matter in them.

In our day the ignorance of the educated crowd has already reached the stage when all true great thinkers, poets, prose writers, both of antiquity and of the nineteenth century, are regarded as out of date and no longer capable of satisfying the refined and lofty demands of new humanity; they all are regarded with contempt or with a smile of condescension. The immoral, coarse, bombastic, disjointed prattle of Nietzsche is accepted to-day as the last word of philosophy; a senseless, artificial combination of words connected only by rhyme and rhythm, in various decadent verse, is regarded as poetry of the highest order; in all the theatres plays are given the sense of which is comprehensible to no one, not excepting the author; and novels which contain neither subject nor art are printed and disseminated in millions of copies under the pretext of being works of art.

"What am I to read to complete my education?" a young man or girl asks, upon leaving the higher school. The man from the ranks who has learnt to read and to understand what he reads, and is in search of true enlightenment, asks the same.

The naïve attempt to inquire of distinguished men the hundred books they regard as best is of course insufficient to answer such questions.

Nor is any help afforded by the division, current in our European society and tacitly accepted by every one, of all writers into categories of the first, second, third, etc., orders; into geniuses, men of great talent, talent, merely clever. Such a division not only fails to assist the true understanding of the merits of literature, and the discovery of what is good in the sea of what is bad, but even hinders it. And besides the fact that this division into categories is itself very often mistaken, and is upheld only because it was established long ago and is accepted by every one, — besides this, such a division is harmful because writers who are recognized as of the highest order produce some very bad works, and those of the lowest order some admirable ones. So that the man who accepts the division of writers into categories and the idea that all a first-rate writer produces is excellent, and that all the productions of a man of a lower category, or quite unknown, are necessarily weak, such a man becomes confused in his appreciations, and is deprived of much that is useful and truly enlightening.

Only true criticism can answer the most important question to-day of the youth of the cultured classes who is in search of knowledge, or of the man from the ranks who is in search of enlightenment. Not the criticism existing to-day, the aim of which is to praise the works which have become famous and to invent for their justification cloudy philosophico-esthetic theories. Not the criticism which is occupied in ridiculing, more or less humorously, works considered bad, or those of another camp. And still less the criticism, established and still flourishing amongst us, which has for its object the definition of the direction in which society as a whole is moving, founded on types described by various authors, and in general of expressing the critic's own economic and political views under the guise of reviews of literary works.

The answer to the stupendously important question: What is one to read out of all that is written? can be given only by true criticism, — that criticism whose object, as Matthew Arnold says, is to bring forward and

point out to men all that is best both in past and present writers.

From the event whether such a criticism, — disinterested, independent of any party, understanding and loving art, will appear, or not, and whether its authority will be great enough to overcome the commercial puffing of books — depends, in my opinion, the solution to the question whether the last glimmering of enlightenment will perish in our so-called cultured European society before it has spread amongst the masses; or whether it will revive, as it did in the Middle Ages, and spread amongst the majority of the people, who are now deprived of all enlightenment.

The public ignorance of Polenz's fine novel, as well as of many other good works that are drowned in the sea of printed rubbish, while senseless, insignificant, and even absolutely objectionable literary works are discussed on all sides from every point of view, always praised, and dispersed by the million, has called forth these thoughts in me, and I profit by this occasion, which will hardly present itself to me again, of expressing them, however briefly.

# THE ONLY MEANS

(August, 1901)

"All things, therefore, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them : for this is the law and the prophets."  
— MATT. vii. 12.

## I

THERE are more than a thousand millions of working-men in the world. All the bread, all the goods of the whole world, all wherewith people live and are rich, all this is produced by the working-man. But it is not he who profits by the things he produces, but the Government and the rich, — whereas the working population lives in continual need, ignorance, and bondage, and in the contempt of those very people whom they clothe, feed, house, and serve.

The land is taken from the laborer and regarded as the property of those who do not work it, so that in order to be fed by the land the man who works it must do everything the owners demand. If the laborer leaves the land, and enters service or mills or factories, he falls into bondage to other wealthy people, for whom during the whole of his life he has to work ten, twelve, fourteen or more hours a day, at alien, monotonous, tedious work, often pernicious to health and life. If he is able to settle on the land or to procure work so as to feed himself without want, then he is not left alone, but taxes are demanded of him, and in addition he himself is taken for three, four, five years into military service, or is forced to pay taxes for military purposes. If he desires to use the land without payment, or to arrange strikes, or to hinder other workmen from occupying his place, or if he refuses to pay taxes, then troops are



sent against him, he is wounded, killed, and compelled by force to work and to pay just as before.

So that the working-men all over the world live, not like men, but like beasts of burden who are compelled all their life to do not what is necessary to them, but to their oppressors, receiving in return only just so much food, clothing, and rest as enables them to go on working unceasingly. Whereas that small group of people who dominate the laborers, profiting by all they produce, live in idleness and insane luxury, uselessly and immorally squandering the labor of millions.

And thus the majority of the population of the whole world lives, not in Russia only, but also in France, and in Germany, and in England, and in China, and in India, and in Africa: everywhere. Whose fault is this? And how shall this be put right? Some say that it is the fault of those who possess the land without working it, and that it is necessary to give the land to the workers; others say that it is the fault of the rich who own the instruments of labor, that is, factories and mills, and that it is necessary that the factories and mills shall become the property of the workmen. Others again say that the whole organization of life is to blame, and that it is necessary to change this organization altogether.

Is this true?

## II

ABOUT five years ago, during the coronation of Nicholas II. at Moscow, the people were offered a free supply of beer, brandy, and buns. When the crowd proceeded to the place where these things were being distributed, a crush ensued. Those in front were knocked off their feet by those behind, and these were crushed by those yet farther back; and no one seeing what was happening in front, they all kept pushing and pressing each other on. The weak were overthrown by the strong, and then the strong ones themselves, suffocated by the crush and want of air, also fell to the ground and were trampled by those who were

pushed from behind and could not halt. And thus several thousand people, old and young, men and women, were crushed to death.

When it was all over people began to argue as to who was to blame for it. Some said it was the police; others the organizers; others that the fault was the Tsar's, who had initiated the silly device of such an entertainment. People accused every one except themselves. And yet it would appear clear that only those were to blame who, in order to obtain a handful of cake and a pot of beer before their neighbors, rushed forward without paying attention to the others, and hustled and trampled them.

Is not the same thing taking place with the working people? They are exhausted, crushed, enslaved, only because for some miserable advantage they themselves ruin their own lives and those of their brothers.

The laborers complain of the landlords, of the Governments, of the factory owners, of the military. But the landowners exploit land, the Governments collect taxes, factory owners dispose of the workmen, and the troops suppress strikes, only because the laborers themselves not only help the landowners, the Government, the factory owners, the troops, but they themselves do all those things of which they complain. If a landowner can profit by thousands of acres of land without cultivating it himself, it is only because the workmen, for their own profit, go to work for him, and serve him as watchmen, keepers, foremen. So also the Government collects taxes from the workmen only because they themselves, attracted by the wages collected from themselves, become village and district elders,<sup>1</sup> tax-collectors, policemen, excise and customs officials; that is, help the Government to do those things of which they complain. The workmen also complain that the factory owners reduce their pay and compel them to work more and more hours; but this also is done only because the workmen themselves lower the wages by competition, and also hire themselves to the factory owners as ware-

<sup>1</sup> Official functions performed by Russian peasants elected for the purpose by the peasants themselves. — TR.

housemen, overseers, watchmen, and foremen; and search, fine, and in every way oppress their comrades in the interests of their masters.

Lastly, the workmen complain that troops are sent against them if they wish to appropriate the land which they regard as their own, or if they refrain from paying taxes, or organize strikes; but the troops are composed of soldiers, and soldiers are those same workmen, who for personal advantage or from fear of punishment have entered the military service, and, contrary both to their conscience and to the law of God they acknowledge, have taken an oath that they will kill all whom the authorities order them to kill.

So that all the calamities of the workmen are produced by themselves.

They need only cease to help the rich and the Governments, and all their sufferings would cease of themselves.

Why then do they continue doing that which ruins them?

### III

Two thousand years ago a law of God became known to men, the law of reciprocity, that *one should act unto others as one wishes others to act to oneself*, or, as it is expressed by the Chinese teacher Confucius, "Do not do unto others that which you do not wish others to do unto you."

This law is simple, comprehensible to every one, and obviously gives the greatest welfare possible to man. And therefore it would seem that as soon as men had learned this law they ought immediately, as far as possible, to fulfil it themselves, and to use all their powers to teach this law and its fulfilment to the rising generations.

It would seem that long ago all men ought to have acted thus, as this law was expressed almost simultaneously by Confucius and Buddha and the Jewish teacher Hillel and by Jesus.

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Especially it would seem that the men of our Christian world ought to act thus, recognizing as they do, as the chief divine revelation, that Gospel in which it is explicitly taught that in this law "is all the law and the prophets," that is, all the teaching necessary to man.

And yet almost two thousand years have elapsed and men not only refrain from fulfilling this law and from teaching it to their children, but in most cases they do not themselves even know it, or if they do they regard it either as unnecessary or as unpractical.

At first this seems strange, but when one thinks of how people lived before the discovery of this law, and how long they lived so, and of how the law disagrees with the life of humanity as it has developed, then one begins to understand why it happened that the law was not fulfilled.

. It happened because while men did not know the law that for the welfare of all each should do unto others that which he would have others do unto him (the law of reciprocity), every man endeavored, for his own profit, to appropriate as much power as possible over other men.

And having appropriated such power, he had in his turn, in order to profit by it unhindered, to subordinate himself to those who were stronger than he, and to help them. These stronger ones in their turn had to submit to those who were stronger than they, and to help them.

So that in societies which did not know the law of reciprocity, of acting with others as one wishes others to act with oneself, always a small number of men dominated all the rest.

And therefore it is comprehensible that when this law was revealed to men, the small number of those who dominated the rest not only were averse to accepting it for themselves, but also could not desire that those dominated by them should learn and accept it.

The small number of dominating people knew and know very well that their power was and is founded only on the fact that those they dominate are continually fighting among themselves, endeavoring to subju-

gate each other. And therefore they have used and are always using all the means in their power to conceal this law from their subordinates.

They conceal the law, not by denying it, which is impossible, as it is so clear and simple, but by putting forward hundreds, thousands of other laws which they assert are more important and obligatory than this law of reciprocity.

Some of these men, priests, teach hundreds of ecclesiastical dogmas, rites, offerings, liturgies, which have nothing in common with the law of reciprocity, and announce *them* as the most important laws of God, the neglect of which involves eternal ruin.

Others, the rulers, having appropriated the teaching invented by the priests, institute, on the strength of this, State regulations, which are directly contrary to the law of reciprocity, and under threat of punishment demand from all their fulfilment.

Others again, learned and rich men, acknowledging neither God nor any obligatory divine law, teach that there is only science and its laws, which they, the learned, discover, and the rich know, and that in order that it should be well for all, it is necessary that people should cultivate through the medium of schools, lectures, theatres, concerts, picture galleries, meetings, the same idle life led by the learned and the rich, and then, they affirm, all the evil from which the workmen suffer will destroy itself.

None of these classes repudiate the law itself, but they put forward side by side with it such a number of all kinds of theological, State, and scientific laws, that amidst them all that simple, clear, and universally accessible law of God, the fulfilment of which undoubtedly delivers the majority of men from their sufferings, not only becomes imperceptible, but completely disappears.

It is from this cause the wonderful fact has arisen and still arises, that working-men, crushed by the Government and the wealthy, continue, generation after generation, to ruin their own lives and the lives of their brothers; to resort for the alleviation of their position to

the most complicated, or cunning, or difficult means, such as prayers, offerings, meek fulfilment of State demands, meetings, associations, trade unions, strikes, revolutions; but do not resort to *the only means*: the fulfilment of the law of God, which most certainly would liberate them from their calamities.

#### IV

“BUT is it possible that in so simple and short an utterance, that people should act with others as they desire others to act with them, the whole law of God and the entire guidance of man’s life can consist?” those will say who are accustomed to the complication and intricacy of theological, State, and scientific arguments.

Such people imagine that the law of God and the guidance of man’s life *must* be expressed in diffuse, complicated theories, and therefore cannot be expressed in so short and simple a statement.

It is true that this law of reciprocity is very short and simple, but it is precisely this shortness and simplicity which demonstrates that it is a true, indubitable, eternal, and righteous law; a law of God elaborated by thousands of years of the life of all humanity, and not the production of one man or of one group of men calling themselves the Church, the State, or Science. Theological discussions about the fall of a first man, his redemption, and the second advent; or State and scientific discussions about parliaments, supreme authority, the theory of punishment, property value, classification of science, natural selection, and so forth, — may be very witty and profound, but are always accessible only to a small number of men. Whereas the law of acting with others as one wishes they would act with oneself is accessible to all men, without distinction of race, religion, education, or even age.

Besides this, theological, State, or scientific arguments, which are accepted as true at one place and at one time, are regarded as untrue at another place and

another time; whereas this law of reciprocity, wherever known, is universally regarded as true, and cannot cease to be true for those who have once comprehended it.

But the chief distinction between this law and all others, and its principal advantage, is that all theological, State, scientific laws, not only fail to pacify men and to give them welfare, but often it is precisely these laws which produce the greatest enmity and suffering.

The law of doing unto others as you wish others to do to you, or of not doing to others as you do not wish to be treated, if only it were recognized by you, could not produce anything but concord and welfare. And therefore the consequences of this law are infinitely beneficial and diverse, determining all possible mutual relations of men, and everywhere substituting concord and service for discord and strife. Were men only to liberate themselves from the frauds which conceal this law from them, to recognize its imperativeness, and to cultivate its adaptation to life, a science, non-existent at present, would appear, common to all men, and the most important in the world: a science teaching how, on the basis of this law, all collisions could be avoided, both between separate individuals and between individuals and society. And if this as yet non-existent science were established and cultivated, and taught to all adults and children as pernicious superstitions and often useless or harmful sciences are now taught, then the whole life of man would change, and with it those oppressive conditions in which the enormous majority of mankind now live.

## V

THE Biblical tradition affirms that long before this law of reciprocity was revealed God gave man "His law."

In this law was included the Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." This Commandment, for its time, was as important and fruitful as the later law of reciprocity,

but the same thing happened with the former as with the latter. It was not directly repudiated by men, but like the later law it became lost amid other rules and regulations, which were recognized as equally or even more important than the law of the inviolability of human life. If this injunction had existed alone, and if Moses (according to tradition) had brought down on his tablets as the sole Commandment of God merely these words, "Thou shalt not kill," men would have had to recognize the unalterable imperativeness of this law, admitting of no substitute. And if men were to recognize this command as the sole law of God, and to observe it strictly, even if only as strictly as some observe the keeping of the Sabbath, worshiping *ikons*, the sacrament, abstinence from pork, and so forth, then the whole life of mankind would change; neither wars nor slavery would any longer be possible, nor the expropriation of the land by the wealthy from the poor, nor the possession by the few of the product of the labor of the many, because all this is founded only on the possibility or the threat of *killing*.

So it would be if the command, "Thou shalt not kill," were recognized as the only law of God. But when the commandments about the Sabbath day, about not taking God's name, and others, were accepted as equally important and on a par with this law, then naturally yet more new priestly ordinances arose, also recognized as equally binding,—and God's greatest Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," which altered man's whole life, was drowned among them, and not only ceased to be always obligatory,—cases were even found when one could act in complete contradiction to it; so that to the present day this law has not received its proper significance.

The same thing happened also with the law of reciprocity.

So that the chief evil from which men suffer ceased long ago to consist in their ignorance of the true law of God, but in people to whom the knowledge and observance of the true law is disadvantageous, but who are



unable to destroy or refute it, inventing "precept upon precept" and "line upon line," as Isaiah says, and giving them out as equally binding or even more obligatory than the *true* laws of God. And therefore all that is now necessary for the deliverance of men from their sufferings is that they should emancipate themselves from all theological, State, and scientific superstitions, propounded as obligatory laws of life, and having thus liberated themselves, should naturally recognize as more binding for themselves than all other regulations and laws, that true, eternal law of God already known, which gives not to some only, but to all men everywhere, the greatest possible welfare in social life.

## VI

"BUT," some will say, "however just this law of 'not doing to others' may be, it cannot be adapted by itself to every circumstance of life. If men were to recognize this law as always obligatory, without exception, they would have to acknowledge the use of any kind of violence between men as unlawful, for no man desires to undergo violence himself. And without the exercise of violence on some people the safety of the individual cannot be assured, property cannot be protected, one's country cannot be defended, the existing order cannot be maintained."

God says to men, "In order that it should be well for all of you, everywhere and always, observe my law of not doing to others what you do not wish them to do to you."

But men, who have organized a certain system, in the year 1901, in England, Germany, France, Russia, say, "Perhaps things may become worse if we fulfil this law of God given us for our welfare."

We accept a law invented by a group of men, however strange it may be and however bad may be the men who invented it, and we are not afraid of fulfilling it. But a law in accordance not only with reason and

conscience, but explicitly expressed in a book which we regard as the revelation of God, we are afraid of fulfilling this, for fear evil may come of it or disorder ensue.

Is it not evident that people who speak and think thus, speak not of order but of disorder, the disorder in which they live and find profitable?

Order, according to their idea, is a position which enables them to devour the lives of other men, -- while disorder occurs when those devoured desire that their destroyers shall cease to devour them.

Such arguments only demonstrate that the dominating minority feel, in most cases unconsciously, that the recognition of the law of reciprocity would not only destroy their advantageous social position, but would reveal all their immorality and cruelty.

These men cannot argue otherwise.

But for the workmen turned off the land, crushed by taxes, forced into the penal labor of factories, transformed into slaves, into soldiers who torture themselves and their brothers, -- for them it is time they understood that only faith in the law of God and its observance will deliver them from their sufferings.

The non-observance of this law, and consequently their continually increasing calamities, propel them toward this. It is time the laborers should feel that their salvation is in this alone; that they need only begin to observe this law of reciprocity for their position to improve immediately -- to improve just in the degree to which the number of men increase who act with others as they desire others to act with them.

And these are not mere words, not an abstraction like the Church, State, Socialistic, Scientific theories, but an effective means of deliverance.

Theological, State, and Scientific theories and promises offer welfare to the workmen, some in the next world, some in this, but always in a distant future, when the bones of those who live and suffer now are rotten; whereas the law of reciprocity improves the position of the workers at the present moment and without doubt.

Even if all workers did not clearly see that by working on the lands and in the factories of capitalists they afford them the possibility of profiting by the product of the labor of their own brothers, and that therefore by thus working they break the law of reciprocity, or, if, seeing this, they, owing to their wants, had not the power of refusing such work,—still the abstinence from such work even of only a few would, by rendering the position of the capitalists more difficult, immediately ameliorate the position of the rest. And the abstinence from direct participation in the activities of capital and government in the capacities of overseers, clerks, tax-collectors, customs officials, etc. (obviously contrary to the law of reciprocity), would still more ameliorate the position of the workmen, even if all were not capable of refraining from such activities. And further still, the refusal of the workmen to participate in the army (which has murder for its object, the act most contrary to the law of reciprocity),—which nowadays is more and more often directed against the workmen themselves,—would altogether alter for the better the position of the workers.

## VII

THE law of God *is* the law of God not because, as the priests always affirm about their laws, it has been communicated in a miraculous way by God Himself, but because it unmistakably and obviously directs men to that way advancing along which they unquestionably are delivered from their sufferings, and unquestionably obtain the greatest inner (spiritual) and external (physical) welfare,—not some few particularly chosen men, but all men without exception.

Such is the law of God about acting towards others as one wishes that others should act toward oneself. It shows that men fulfilling it unquestionably obtain inner spiritual welfare, in the consciousness of their harmony with the will of God, and of the increase of love in themselves and in others; and that at the same time

they obtain in social life the greatest possible welfare accessible to them. Whereas divergence from this law entails aggravation of their position.

And, as a matter of fact, to any one who does not participate in the mutual struggle between men, but observes life from without, it is evident that the struggling parties act exactly in the same way as gamblers, who surrender a certain though meagre property for the very doubtful possibility of increasing it.

Whether a workman who has lowered the price of his comrades' labor, or has accepted the service of the wealthy, or has entered the army, will better his position, is as doubtful as the success of the gambler. There may be a thousand events owing to which his position will remain the same or become even worse than before. This fact, however, is certain, that his consent to work cheaper or to serve the capitalists and the Government will aggravate, to some extent at all events, the position of all the workers, and his own together with theirs, — as certain as the fact that the gambler loses control over the sum he stakes.

To him who does not participate in the struggle but observes life, it is evident that, as in games of hazard, lotteries, Stock Exchange operations, only the owners of the gambling houses, the lotteries, the stockbrokers' offices, make their fortunes, whereas all those who gamble are ruined. So also in life: it is only the Governments, the wealthy, in general the oppressors, who stand to win; whereas those workers who in the hope of improving their position diverge from the law of reciprocity only aggravate the position of all workers, and therefore also their own.

The law of God is the law of God for this reason, that it defines the position of man in the world, showing him the "best" which he can do for his spiritual as well as for his physical life while in this position.

"Be not anxious," it is said in the Gospel, in explanation of this law; "Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . Your heavenly Father knoweth that

ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

And these are not mere words, but the explanation of the true position of man in the world.

If man only fulfils what God requires of him, if he observes His law, then God also will do for him that which he requires. So that the law of doing to others as one would wish to be done to oneself relates to God also.

In order that He should do for us what we desire, we must do for Him what He desires of us. And He desires of us that we should act with others as we would wish others to act with us. The only difference is that what He desires of us is needful, not for Him, but for ourselves, yielding the highest welfare accessible to us.

## VII

THE workmen must cleanse themselves in order that the Governments and wealthy shall cease to devour their lives. Impurity breeds only in dirt, and it feeds on strange bodies only while they are unclean. And therefore for the deliverance of the workers from their calamities there is only one means—that of purifying themselves. And to purify themselves it is necessary that they should be liberated from theological, State, and scientific superstitions, and have faith in God and His law.

In this lies the only means of deliverance.

One meets, at the present time, either an educated or an ordinary, almost illiterate, workman. Both are filled with indignation against the existing order of things. The educated workman believes neither in God nor His law, but he knows Marx, Lassalle, and follows the activities of Bebel, Jaures, in Parliaments, and he delivers stirring orations about the injustice of the seizure of the land and the implements of labor, of transference of property by inheritance, etc.; the uneducated

workman, although he does not know these theories, and believes in the Trinity, the Redemption, etc., is equally indignant with the landlords and capitalists, and regards the whole existing organization as wrong. And yet, give this workman, either the educated or uneducated one, the possibility of bettering his position by producing certain articles cheaper than others, although it may ruin scores, hundreds, thousands, of his comrades, or the possibility of entering the service of the capitalists in a position which gives him a greater salary, or of buying land, or organizing a business himself with hired labor, — and nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand will do it without scruple, and defend their possession of the land or their privileges as employers often even more strenuously than born landlords and capitalists.

As to their participation in murder (that is, in military service, or in taxes destined to the support of troops), an act not only morally wrong but most pernicious to their comrades and themselves, the very act which forms the basis of their slavery — about this none of them trouble, and all consent either to pay the taxes for the army or to become soldiers themselves, regarding such actions as quite normal.

Is it possible that out of such men any society can be formed other than the one which now exists?

The workmen lay the blame of their position on the avarice and cruelty of the landowners, capitalists, coercionists; but all or almost all the workmen, without faith in God and His law, are similarly, only on a smaller and unsuccessful scale, landowners, capitalists, and coercionists.

A country lad in need of a livelihood comes up to town to a friend who has a place as a coachman in the house of a wealthy merchant, and begs him to find him a berth at wages lower than those current. The country lad is ready to accept such a situation, but, coming next morning, he casually overhears in the servants' room the complaint of an old man who has lost his situation and is at a loss to know how to live. The lad is

sorry for the old man and he relinquishes his berth, not wishing to act to another man as he does not wish to be done to. Or else a peasant with a large family accepts the well-paid position of steward to a rich and exacting landowner. The new steward, feeling his family now provided for, is glad of the situation; but on entering his duties he has immediately to enforce fines on the peasants for horses which have strayed in the gentleman's fields; he has to catch women collecting dead branches for their fires in the landowner's woods; he has to reduce the wages of the workmen and to compel them to labor to the utmost verge of their strength. And the steward feels that his conscience does not allow him to do these things. He refuses, and notwithstanding the complaints and reproaches of his family, he gives up his situation and occupies himself with something else which yields him much less. Or else again a soldier has been brought with his company against workmen in revolt and told to fire at them. He refuses to obey, and for this endures cruel suffering. All these men act thus because the evil they are doing to others is evident to them, and their heart clearly tells them that this which they are doing is contrary to the law of God, that one should not do to others as one does not wish others to act to oneself. But if a workman beating down the price of certain work does not see those whom he thereby injures, the evil he thus causes to his comrades does not therefore diminish. And if a workman passes over to the side of the employers and neither sees nor feels the injury he is causing his comrades, the injury still remains. It is the same with a man who enters the military service and prepares to kill his brothers if necessary. If he does not yet see, when entering the service, whom and where he will kill when he learns to shoot and to stab, he can at any rate understand that shooting and stabbing will be his work.

And therefore, in order that the workmen should free themselves from their oppression and bondage, they must educate in themselves the religious feeling which prohibits all that aggravates the general condition of

their brothers, even when this aggravation is not apparent. They must religiously refrain (as people now refrain from eating pork, eating meat during fasts, from work on Sundays, and so forth), firstly, from working for capitalists if they can possibly live without; secondly, from offering their work at a lower rate than that current; thirdly, from improving their position by passing over to the side of the capitalists and serving their interests; and fourthly and chiefly, from participating in Government coercion, be it police, custom-house, or military service.

Only by such a religious attitude toward the form of their activity can the workmen liberate themselves from their oppression.

If the workman for gain or from fear is ready to enter the ranks of organized murderers, — soldiers, — without his conscience rebuking him, if for the increase of his welfare he is ready deliberately to deprive his more needy comrade of his earnings, or for the sake of salary to pass over to the side of the oppressors, helping them in their activity, he has nothing to complain of.

Whatever his position he makes it himself, and he himself cannot be other than one of the oppressed or one of the oppressors.

And this cannot be otherwise. Without belief in God and His law man cannot but desire to procure for himself in his short life the greatest amount of welfare, whatever consequences this may entail for others. And as soon as people desire, each one for himself, the greatest possible welfare, independently of the consequences to others, then inevitably, whatever the organization introduced, such men will form a heap with a pointed top, a pyramid, — at the apex the rulers, and underneath them the oppressed.

## IX

It is said in the Gospels that Jesus pitied men for their exhaustion and dispersion "like sheep without a shepherd."



What would he have felt and said to-day, seeing men not only exhausted and dispersed like sheep without a shepherd, but millions of men all over the world, generation after generation, ruining themselves in brutish labor, stultified, unenlightened, in the power of vice, killing, torturing each other, — notwithstanding that the means of deliverance from all these calamities was given them two thousand years ago?

The key to the lock of the chain forged around the working people has been placed by their side, and they need only take this key and unlock the chain to become free. But the working-men as yet do not do this, but either undertake nothing and yield themselves to despair; or else struggle and break their bones in the hope of forcibly sundering the unbreakable chain; or else, which is even worse, acting like a captive animal when it rushes at the one who tries to free it, they attack those who indicate the key which would open the lock on their chain.

This key is faith in God and His law.

Only when men throw off those superstitions in which they are deliberately trained, when they believe that the law of doing to others what one desires others to do to oneself is the most important divine law of our time, and believe this as firmly as some now believe in keeping the Sabbath, others in fasting, liturgies, sacraments, and others in the repetition of prayers, or the observance of oaths, and so forth; and when, having thus believed, they fulfil this law in preference to all other laws and ordinances, — only then will the slavery and distressed condition of the workmen be abolished.

And therefore it is necessary that the workmen themselves should first of all, without sparing old habits and traditions, and without fearing external persecution from Church and State, or internal strife with one's relatives, — boldly and deliberately free themselves from the false faiths in which they have been educated, shall more and more make clear to themselves and others, and especially to the young generations and to children, the essence of faith in God and of the consequent law of

reciprocity, and shall follow this law to their utmost strength although it involve temporary disadvantages. Thus the workmen themselves should act.

As to the ruling minority, who, profiting by the labor of the workmen, have acquired all the advantages of education, and therefore can clearly discern the deceits in which the laborers are kept—as to these, if they do indeed desire to serve the working people, they should first of all, both by example and by word, endeavor to free them from those religious and State deceits in which they are entangled, and not act as they now do: that is, while sparing, supporting, and even strengthening by their example these deceits, especially the chief religious ones, offer ineffective and even pernicious remedies, which not only fail to liberate the workmen from their calamities, but even more and more aggravate their position.

When, where, and how this will be accomplished no one can say. One thing only is certain—that this means alone can free the enormous majority of mankind—all the laborers—from their humiliations and sufferings.

There are no other means, nor can there be.

# MY REPLY TO THE SYNOD'S EDICT EXCOMMUNICATING ME ON FEB- RUARY 20-22, AND TO LETTERS CONCERNING IT

(April 4, 1901)

"He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or Church better than Christianity, and end by loving himself better than all." — COLERIDGE.

I DID not at first intend answering the Edict of the Synod concerning me, but it has called forth many letters from unknown correspondents, of whom some abuse me for denying what I do not deny, others exhort me to believe in what I have never ceased to believe, and others, again, express a fellowship with me that can hardly really exist, and a sympathy to which I hardly have a right. So I have decided to answer both the Edict itself, showing what is unjust in it, and the letters from these unknown correspondents.

The Edict in general has many faults. It is either illegal, or else intentionally ambiguous; it is arbitrary, groundless, and untruthful, and, besides, contains libels, and incitements to evil feelings and actions.

It is either illegal or intentionally ambiguous because, if intended to be an excommunication from the Church, it does not fulfil those Church regulations according to which such excommunications can alone be pronounced; if, on the other hand, it is a declaration that he who does not believe in the Church and its dogmas does not belong to it, the statement goes without saying, and such a declaration can have no other object than that it should appear as an excommunication, without in reality being such; and this, as a matter of fact, is what has happened, the Edict having been understood in this light.

It is arbitrary, because it accuses me alone of unbelief in all the enumerated points, whereas not only many, but almost all educated people share this unbelief, and constantly have expressed, and do express it in conversation, in letters, in pamphlets, and in books.

It is groundless, because the chief reason which is put forward for its announcement is the great circulation of my seductive false teachings, whereas I am well aware that there are in Russia hardly a hundred individuals who share my views, and that the circulation of my writings about religion is so insignificant, owing to the censorship, that the majority of those who have read the Synod's Edict have not the slightest idea of what I have written about religion, as is evident from the letters I have received.

It contains glaring untruth in its statement that the Church has made unsuccessful efforts to convince me of my errors. Nothing of the kind has ever been done.

It constitutes what in legal terminology is called a libel, as it contains intentionally unjust assertions tending to cause me injury.

Lastly, it is an incitement to evil feelings and actions, for it has called forth, as one might expect, spite and hatred toward me from unenlightened and unreasoning people, reaching even to threats of assassination in the letters I have received. "Now thou art given up to an anathema, and wilt after death go to eternal suffering, and wilt die like a dog . . . anathema, thou old devil . . . be cursed," writes one. Another rebukes the Government for not having yet incarcerated me in a monastery, and fills his letter with invective. A third writes: "If the Government will not remove thee, we will ourselves render thee silent." This letter concludes with maledictions: "I will find means to destroy thee, thou villain. . . ." Then follow indecent abuses. I remarked symptoms of a similar spitefulness when meeting some people after the Synod's Edict. On the very day when the Edict was published, while walking in the streets I heard the words, "Here is the devil in man's image," and if the crowd had been differently com-

posed it is very possible that I should have been beaten as a man was beaten a few years ago in front of the Panteleymon Chapel

So the Synod's Edict in general is very wicked; and the fact that it concludes with the statement that those who have signed it pray God that I should become like them does not make it better.

In detail the Edict is incorrect in the following: It says that "the well-known writer, Russian by birth, Orthodox by baptism and education, Count Tolstor, seduced by the pride of his intellect, has audaciously revolted against the Lord and His Christ and against His holy household, and has openly and publicly renounced the Orthodox Mother Church which has reared and educated him."

That I have renounced the Church which calls itself Orthodox is quite correct.

But I have renounced it not because I have revolted against the Lord; but, on the contrary, only because I desired to serve Him with all the powers of my soul. Before renouncing the Church and that unity with the people which was unspeakably dear to me, I had devoted several years to the study of the Church doctrine, both theoretical and practical, the truth of which for certain reasons I had begun to doubt. For the theory, I read all that I could upon the doctrine of the Church, and studied and critically analyzed its dogmatic theology; practically, I strictly followed, during more than a year, all the prescriptions of the Church, keeping all its fasts and attending all its services. Then I became convinced that the teaching of the Church is theoretically a crafty and pernicious deceit, whilst practically it is a collection of the grossest superstitions and sorcery completely concealing the whole meaning of the Christian teaching. (It is sufficient to read the Prayer Book, and to observe those ceremonies which are incessantly being carried on by Orthodox priesthood and regarded as Christian worship, to see that all these rites are nothing but various methods of sorcery adapted to all possible occasions in life. In order that a child which has died should

go to Paradise, it must be rubbed with oil and bathed to the utterance of certain words; before a woman after childbirth can cease to be unclean, certain conjurations must be recited; to insure success in business or peaceful life in a new house, a good harvest, the termination of a drought, the recovery from an illness, to better the condition of a deceased one in the next world—for all this and a thousand other things there exist certain incantations which must be pronounced by a priest at a certain place, and for a certain consideration.)

And I did indeed renounce the Church and cease to fulfil its ceremonies, and expressed in my will that those near to me when I am dying shall not allow any servants of the Church to approach me, and that my dead body shall be removed as soon as possible without undergoing any sorcery or ritual, as any obnoxious and unnecessary thing would be removed to be out of the way of those who are alive.

As to the statement that I “have devoted my literary activity and the talent given me by God to the propagation amongst the people of teachings contrary to Christ and the Church, etc., in writings and letters disseminated in large quantities all over the world by me as well as by my disciples, and that, especially in the precincts of our dear fatherland, I have preached with the enthusiasm of a fanatic the overthrow of all the dogmas of the Church and of the very essence of the Christian teaching”—this is incorrect. I have never troubled myself about the propagation of my teaching. It is true I have for my own self expressed in my writings my understanding of Christ’s teaching, and have not concealed these works from those who wished to become acquainted with them; but I have never published them myself, and I have communicated to others what I understand by Christ’s teaching only when I have been asked to do so. In such cases I have stated what I think, and have given my books if I had them.

It is further said that I “repudiate God worshiped

in the Holy Trinity as Creator and Guardian of the universe, that I renounce the Lord Jesus Christ, God-man Redeemer and Saviour of the world, Who has suffered for the sake of us men and our salvation, and risen from the dead, that I repudiate the immaculate conception of Christ the Lord and virginity of Mary before and after His birth." That I repudiate the incomprehensible Trinity and the fable about the fall of the first man, which has no meaning at the present time, the sacrilegious story about a God born of a Virgin and redeeming the human race—this is quite true. But God—a Spirit, God—Love, the only God, Source of all—I not only do not repudiate, I recognize nothing else as really existing except God; and the whole meaning of life I see only in the fulfilment of the Will of God as expressed in the Christian teaching.

It is again said: "He does not recognize future life and retribution." If one understands future life in the sense of the Second Advent, of hell with its eternal torments and devils, and of Paradise with its eternal bliss, then it is perfectly correct that I do not recognize such a future life. But eternal life and retribution here and everywhere, now and always, I recognize to such an extent that, standing as I am at my age on the border of the grave, I often have to exert an effort not to desire bodily death, *i.e.*, birth to a new life. And I believe that every righteous act increases the true welfare of my eternal life, and that every evil act diminishes that welfare.

It is also said that I repudiate the Sacraments. This is quite true. I regard all Sacraments as a base and gross sorcery which does not correspond to the idea of God and of the Christian teaching, and, moreover, as an infringement of the most direct injunctions of the Gospel. In the baptism of infants I see a palpable distortion of the meaning which might have been attached to the baptism of adults when they consciously accepted Christianity; in the fulfilment of the marriage ritual in relation to people

who had previously contracted other sexual unions, and in the admission of divorce and the consecration of marriages after divorce, I see the direct infringement of the spirit and the letter of the Gospel teaching. In the periodical remission of sins at confession, I see a pernicious deceit, which only encourages immorality and destroys the fear of committing sin. In anointing with oil, in the worship of *ikons* and relics, and in all those ceremonies, prayers, and incantations with which the Prayer Book is filled, I see the methods of gross enchantment.

In the communion, I see the deification of the flesh and the distortion of the Christian teaching. In ordination, besides an evident preparation for deceit, I see a direct contradiction of Christ's words, which positively forbid calling any one "teacher, father, or master" (Matt. xxiii. 8-10).

Finally, it is said, as the last and highest degree of my culpability, that I reviled the most "sacred objects of belief, and did not shudder at submitting to mockery the most sacred of all Sacraments, the Eucharist." That I did not shudder at describing simply and objectively that which the priest does when preparing this so-called sacrament is quite correct. But that this so-called sacrament is something sacred, and that to describe it simply as it takes place is blasphemy, this is quite incorrect. Blasphemy consists not in calling a screen a screen instead of iconostasis, and a cup a cup instead of chalice, etc. But the most terribly incessant, revolting blasphemy consists in people profiting by all possible means of deceit and hypnotization to induce children and simple-minded people to believe that if one cuts up little bits of bread in a certain way, pronouncing certain words, and puts them into wine, that God enters into these pieces; that he in whose name a piece will be taken out will recover, or if he be dead, his position in the next world will be bettered; and that into him who will eat such a piece God Himself will enter.

Why, it is this which is terrible.

However one may understand the personality of



Christ, that teaching of his which destroys the evil of the world, is so simple, so easy, which so undoubtedly gives welfare to men if only it be not distorted by them, this teaching is completely concealed, completely altered into the gross magic of bathing, rubbing with oil, bodily gestures, enchantments, the swallowing of bits of bread, and so forth; so that of the teaching nothing has been left, and if one ever attempts to remind people that the teachings of Christ consist not in these sorceries, Te Deums, Masses, candles, *ikons*, but in men loving one another, not returning evil for evil, not judging, not killing each other—then the wrath of those to whom this deceit is advantageous is excited, and these men publicly, with inconceivable arrogance, declare in churches, publish in books, newspapers, catechisms, that Christ never forbade oaths, never forbade murder (executions, wars), that the teaching of non-resistance to evil has been with Satanic slyness invented by the enemies of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

It is terrible, above all, that people to whom this is advantageous deceive not only those who are grown up, but, having the power to do so, children also, those very children about whom Christ said, "Woe to him that shall deceive them." It is terrible that these men, for the sake of their petty advantages, commit this frightful evil and conceal from men the truth which was revealed by Christ, and gives welfare—such welfare as cannot be compensated even in a thousandth degree by the advantage they receive from this. They are like the robber who murders a whole family of five or six persons to carry away with him an old coat and a shilling's worth of coppers. All the clothes and money would be willingly surrendered if only he did not murder them: but he cannot act otherwise. So also with the religious deceivers. One could maintain them ten times better in the greatest possible luxury if only they would cease to cause men to perish by their deceit. But they cannot act otherwise. This it is which is ter-

<sup>1</sup> Speech by Ambrosius, Bishop of Harkov.

rible, and therefore it is not only permissible but obligatory on one to reveal their deceit. If there be anything sacred, it certainly is not that which they call sacraments, but precisely this duty of exposing their religious deceit when one sees it.

If a savage rub his idol with cream, or beat it, I may pass by indifferently without offending his belief, because he does this in the name of his superstition, which is strange to me, and does not concern what I consider sacred; but when men by their wild superstition, however many of them there may be, however old may be the superstition, and however powerful they may be—in the name of that God by whom I live, and that teaching of Christ which has given me life and can give it to all men—when they preach gross sorcery, I cannot remain an indifferent witness. And if I call what they are doing by its name, I only fulfil that which I should, which I cannot refrain from if I believe in God and the Christian teaching. And if they call this disclosure of their deceit blasphemy, it only proves the power of the deceit, and should only increase the efforts of those who believe in God and in the teaching of Christ, to destroy the deceit which conceals from men the true God.

Concerning Christ, who drove the oxen, sheep, and merchants out of the Temple, it was inevitable that men should say he was a blasphemer. If he were to come now and to see what is being done in his name in the Church, he would certainly, with yet greater and lawful anger, throw away all these dreadful robes and apparels and crosses and chalices and candles and *ikons*, and all those things by the means of which they accomplish their magic and conceal God and His teaching from man.

So this is what is correct and incorrect in the Edict of the Synod concerning me. I do not indeed believe in what they say they believe in. But I do believe in much of what they wish to persuade people I do not believe in.

I believe in this: I believe in God, whom I compre-

hend as Spirit, as Love, as the Source of all. I believe that He is in me and I in Him. I believe that the Will of God is the most clearly and comprehensively expressed in the teaching of the man Christ,—to regard whom as God, and to pray to whom, I deem the greatest sacrilege. I believe that the true welfare of man lies in the fulfilment of the Will of God; and that His will consists in men loving each other, and therefore behaving toward others as they desire that others should behave with them; as it is said in the Gospels, “in this is contained all the law and the prophets.” I believe that the meaning of the life of every man, therefore, lies only in the increase of love in himself; that this increase of love leads the individual man in this life toward greater and greater welfare; that after death it gives the greater welfare the more love there be in the man; and that, at the same time, more than anything else, it contributes to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, *i.e.*, to an order of life where the discord, deceit, and violence which now reign will be replaced by free agreement, truth, and brotherly love between men. I believe that for the development of Love there is but one means—prayer, not public prayer in churches, which was expressly forbidden by Christ (Matt. vi. 5-13); but that prayer an example of which is given by Christ, solitary prayer consisting in the reestablishment and strengthening in one’s consciousness of the meaning of one’s life and of one’s dependence solely upon the Will of God.

Whether these, my beliefs, do or do not offend, grieve, or perplex any one, whether they hinder anything or displease any one—I am as little able to alter them as I am to alter my body. I have to live alone, and I have to die alone (and that very soon), and therefore I cannot possibly believe otherwise than as I do, preparing to go to that God from whom I have come. I do not say that my belief is the only undoubtedly true one for all times, but I do not see any other more simple, clear, and answering all the demands of my mind and heart. Were I to learn a better, I would immediately

accept it, because God requires nothing but the truth. But to return to that from which I have just escaped with such sufferings, I decidedly cannot, as a flying bird cannot return into the eggshell from which it has come.

Coleridge has said : " He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or Church better than Christianity, and end by loving himself " (his own peace) " better than all."

I have advanced in the opposite way. I began by loving my Orthodox faith more than my peace; then I loved Christianity more than my Church; and now I love the Truth more than anything in the world. And until now the Truth coincides for me with Christianity as I understand it; and I profess this Christianity, and in that measure in which I do profess it I peacefully and joyously live and peacefully and joyously am approaching death.

# "THOU SHALT NOT KILL"

## ON THE DEATH OF KING HUMBERT

(*September, 1900*)

"Thou shalt do no murder." — EX. xx. 13.

"The disciple is not above his master: but every one when he is perfected shall be as his master" — LUKE vi. 40.

"For all they that take up the sword shall perish with the sword." — MATT. xxvi. 52.

"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them." — MATT. vii. 12.

WHEN kings are tried and executed like Charles I., Louis XVI., and Maximilian of Mexico; or killed in a palace conspiracy like Peter III., Paul, and all kinds of Sultans, Shahs, and Khans, the event is generally passed over in silence. But when one of them is killed without a trial, and not by a palace conspiracy; like Henry IV., Alexander II., Carnot, the Empress of Austria, the Shah of Persia, and, recently, King Humbert, then such murder causes great surprise and indignation among Kings and Emperors, and those attached to them, as if they were the great enemies of murder, as if they never profited by murder, never took part in it, and never gave orders to commit it. And yet the kindest of these murdered Kings, such as Alexander II. or Humbert, were guilty of the murder of tens of thousands of persons killed on the battle-field, not to mention those executed at home; while hundreds of thousands, and even millions, of people have been killed, hanged, beaten to death, or shot, by the more cruel Kings and Emperors.

Christ's teaching cancels the law "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"; but those men who have kept to the older law and still keep to it, who act upon it by

punishing and carrying on wars, and who not only act on the law “an eye for an eye,” but give orders to kill thousands without any provocation, by declaring war, — *they* have no right to be indignant when the same law is applied to themselves in so infinitesimal a measure that hardly one King or Emperor gets killed to a hundred thousand, or perhaps to a million ordinary people killed by the order, or with the consent, of Kings and Emperors.

Kings and Emperors should not be indignant when such murders as that of Alexander II. or Humbert occur, but should, on the contrary, be surprised that such murders are so rare, considering the continual and universal example of committing murders they themselves set the people.

Kings and Emperors are surprised and horrified when one of themselves is murdered, and yet the whole of their activity consists in managing murder and preparing for murder. The keeping up, the teaching and exercising, of armies with which Kings and Emperors are always so much occupied, and of which they are the organizers, — what is it but preparation for murder?

The masses are so hypnotized that, though they see what is continually going on around them, they do not understand what it means. They see the unceasing care Kings, Emperors, and Presidents bestow on disciplined armies, see the parades, reviews, and manœuvres they hold, and of which they boast to one another, and the people eagerly crowd to see how their own brothers, dressed up in bright-colored, glittering clothes, are turned into machines to the sound of drums and trumpets, and, obedient to the shouting of one man, all make the same movements; and they do not understand the meaning of it all.

Yet the meaning of such drilling is very clear and simple. It is preparing for murder. It means the stupefying of men in order to convert them into instruments for murdering.

And it is just Kings and Emperors and Presidents who do it, and organize it, and pride themselves on it.

And it is these same people whose special employment is murder-organizing, who have made murder their profession, who dress in military uniforms, and carry weapons (swords at their side), who are horror-struck and indignant when one of themselves is killed.

. It is not because such murders as the recent murder of Humbert are exceptionally cruel that they are so terrible. Things done by the order of Kings and Emperors, not only in the days of old, such as the massacre of St. Bartholomew, persecutions for faith, terrible ways of putting down peasant riots, but also the present executions, the torture of solitary cells and disciplinary battalions, hanging, decapitation, shooting, and slaughter at the wars, are incomparably more cruel than the murders committed by Anarchists.

Nor is it on account of their injustice that these murders are terrible. If Alexander and Humbert did not deserve death, the thousands of Russians who perished at Plevna, and of Italians who perished in Abyssinia, deserved it still less. No, it is not because of their cruelty and injustice these murders are terrible, but because of the want of reason in those who perpetrate them.

If the regicides commit murder under the influence of feelings of indignation evoked by witnessing the sufferings of the enslaved people, for which sufferings they hold Alexander II., Carnot, or Humbert responsible, or because they are influenced by personal desire for revenge, — however immoral such conduct may be, still it is comprehensible; but how can an organized body of Anarchists such as those by whom, it is said, Bréssi was sent out, and by whom another Emperor was threatened, how can it, quietly considering means of improving the condition of the people, find nothing better to do than to murder people, the killing of whom is as useful as cutting off one of the Hydra's heads?

Kings and Emperors have long established a system resembling the mechanism of a magazine rifle, *i.e.*, as soon as one bullet flies out another takes its place. "*Le roi est mort — vive le roi!*" Then what is the use of killing them? It is only from a most

superficial point of view that the murder of such persons can seem a means of saving the people from oppression and wars, which destroy their lives.

We need only remember that the same kind of oppression and war went on no matter who stood at the head of the Government: Nicholas or Alexander, Louis or Napoleon, Frederic or William, Palmerston or Gladstone, McKinley or any one else, in order to see that it is not some definite person who causes the oppression and the wars from which people suffer.

The misery of the people is not caused by individuals, but by an order of Society by which they are bound together in a way that puts them in the power of a few, or, more often, of one man: a man so depraved by his unnatural position, — having the fate and lives of millions of people in his power, — that he is always in an unhealthy state and suffering more or less from a mania of self-aggrandizement, which is not noticed in him only because of his exceptional position.

Apart from the fact that such men are surrounded, from the cradle to the grave, by the most insane luxury and its usual accompaniment of flattery and servility, the whole of their education, and all their occupations, are centered on the one object of murder, the study of murder in the past, the best means of murdering in the present, the best ways of preparing for murder in the future. From their earliest years they learn the art of murder in all possible forms, always carry about with them instruments of murder, dress in different uniforms, attend parades, manœuvres, and reviews, visit each other, present orders and the command of regiments to each other. And yet not only does nobody tell them the real name of their actions, not only does nobody tell them that preparing for murder is revolting and criminal, but they hear nothing but praise and words of admiration from all around them for these actions.

The only part of the Press that reaches them, and which seems to them to be the expression of the feel-



ings of the best of the people or their best representatives, exalts all their words and deeds, however silly and wicked they may be, in the most servile manner. All who surround them, men and women, cleric or lay, all these people who do not value human dignity, vie with each other in flattering them in the most refined manner, agree with them in everything, and deceive them continually, making it impossible for them to know life as it is. These men might live to be a hundred and never see a real, free man, and never hear the truth.

We are sometimes appalled by the words and deeds of these men, but if we only consider their state we cannot but see that any man would act in the same way in such a position. A reasonable man can do but one thing in such a position, *i.e.*, leave it. Every one who remains in such a position will act in the same manner.

What, indeed, must be going on in the head of some William of Germany, a man of limited understanding, little education, and with a great deal of ambition, whose ideals are like those of a German "junker," when any silly or horrid thing he may say is always met with an enthusiastic "*Hoch!*" and commented on, as if it were something very important, by the Press of the whole world? He says that the soldiers should be prepared to kill their own fathers in obedience to his command. The answer is "Hurrah!" He says the Gospels must be introduced with a fist of iron. "Hurrah!" He says that the Army must not take any prisoners in China, but kill all, and he is not placed in a lunatic asylum, but they cry "Hurrah!" and set sail for China to execute his orders.

Or Nicholas, who, though naturally modest, begins his reign by declaring to venerable old men, in answer to the desire they express of being allowed to discuss their own affairs, that their hope for self-government is a senseless dream. And the organs of the Press that reach him, and the people whom he meets, praise him for it. He proposes a childish, silly, and untruthful

project of universal peace at the same time that he is ordering an increase of the Army, and even then there are no limits to the laudations of his wisdom and his virtue. Without any reason, he senselessly and pitilessly offends the whole of the Finnish nation, and again hears nothing but praise. At last he enters upon the Chinese slaughter, terrible by its injustice, cruelty, and its contrast with his project of peace; and he gets applauded simultaneously from all sides, both for his own conquests and for his adherence to his father's policy of peace. What must indeed be going on in the heads and hearts of such men?

So that it is not Alexanders and Humberts, Williams, Nicholases, and Chamberlains, who are the cause of oppression and war, even though they do organize them, but it is those who have placed them in, and support them in, a position in which they have power over the life and death of men.

Therefore it is not necessary to kill Alexanders and Nicholases, Williams and Humberts, but only to leave off supporting the social condition of which they are the product. It is the selfishness and stupefaction of the people who sell their freedom and their honor for insignificant material advantages, which supports the present state of society.

Those who stand on the lowest rung of the ladder, partly as a consequence of being stupefied by a patriotic and pseudo-religious education, partly for the sake of personal advantages, give up their freedom and their feeling of human dignity to those who stand higher, and who offer them material advantages. In a like position are those standing a little higher. They, too, through being stupefied, and especially for material advantages, give up their freedom and sense of human dignity. The same is true of those standing still higher; and so it continues up to the highest rungs, up to the person or persons who, standing on the very summit of the social cone, have no one to submit to, nor anywhere to rise to, and have no motive for action except ambition and love of power. These are generally

so depraved and stupefied by their insane power over life and death, and by the flattery and servility of those around them, which is connected with such power, that while doing evil they feel convinced they are the benefactors of the human race. It is the people themselves who, by sacrificing their human dignity for material profits, produce these men, and are afterwards angry with them for their stupid and cruel acts; murdering such people is like whipping children after spoiling them.

Very little seems needed to stop oppression and useless war, and to prevent any one from being indignant with those who seem to be the cause of such oppression and war.

Only that things should be called by their right names and seen as they are; that it should be understood that an army is an instrument of murder, that the recruiting and drilling of armies which Kings, Emperors, and Presidents carry on with so much self-assurance are preparations for murder.

If only every King, Emperor, and President would understand that his work of organizing armies is not an honorable and important duty, as his flatterers persuade him it is, but a most abominable business, *i.e.*, the preparing for, and the managing of, murder. If only every private individual understood that the payment of taxes which helps to equip soldiers, and above all, military service, are not immaterial but highly immoral actions, by which he not only permits murder, but takes part in it himself — then this power of the Kings and Emperors which arouses indignation, and causes them to be killed, would come to an end of itself.

And so the Alexanders, Carnots, Humberts, and others should not be killed, but it ought to be shown them that they are murderers; and above all, they should not be allowed to kill men; their orders to murder should not be obeyed.

If men do not yet act in this manner, it is only because Governments, to maintain themselves, diligently exercise a hypnotic influence upon the people. There-

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fore we can help to prevent people killing Kings and each other, not by murder, — murders only strengthen this hypnotic state, — but by arousing men from the delusion in which they are held.

And it is this that I have tried to do in these remarks.

# HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE?

(December, 1898)

## I

A BOY is born in the country. Laboring always with his father, his grandfather, his mother, he sees each year the finest crops from the fields he and his father have plowed, harrowed, and sowed—the fields that his mother and sister have mowed and reaped, binding the corn into the sheaves which he himself has helped to stack—he sees always that his father carries the best of these crops, not to his own house, but to the squire's barn beyond the manor gardens.

As they pass the manor-house with the creaking cart he and his father have piled up, the boy sees on the veranda a richly dressed lady seated at a table spread with a silver kettle, fine china, cakes, and sweets; on the other side of the carriage drive he sees the squire's two sons in shining shoes and embroidered shirts playing ball on the smooth lawn.

The ball is knocked over the cart. "Pick it up, boy," cries one of the young gentlemen.

"Pick it up, Johnny!" shouts the father to his son, taking off his cap and walking by the side of the cart holding the reins.

"What does it mean?" thinks the boy. "I am tired with work while they are playing; yet I must fetch the balls for them!"

But he fetches the ball, and the young gentleman takes it from the coarse sunburnt peasant-boy's hand with fine white fingers and returns to the game without noticing him.

The boy's father has gone on with the cart. The boy runs along the road to catch up with them, kicking up the dust with his clumsy, worn-out boots, and together they reach the barn, which is crowded with carts and sheaves. The bustling overseer, his canvas jacket wet with sweat at the back, and a stick in his hand, greets the boy's father with an oath for driving up to the wrong place. The father apologizes, turns back wearily, lugging at the reins of the exhausted horse, and stops at the further side.

The boy approaches his father, and asks: "Father, why do we bring our corn to him? Haven't we grown it?"

"Because the land is theirs," answers his father, angrily.

"Who gave them the land, then?"

"Go and ask the overseer there. He'll explain it to you. Do you see his stick?"

"But what will they do with this corn?"

"Thrash it and grind it, and then sell it."

"And what will they do with the money?"

"They'll buy those cakes with it that you saw on the table when we passed."

The boy becomes quiet and thoughtful. But he has little time for thought. The men shout to his father to bring his cart nearer. He pulls the horse up to the stacks, climbs to the top of his load, unties the rope, and wearily hands the sheaves up one by one, straining his hernia<sup>1</sup> with each effort, while the boy holds the old mare, whom he has driven for the last two years, brushing away the flies as his father tells him, and wondering, for he cannot understand, why the land does not belong to those who work it, but to those young gentlemen who play about in fancy shirts and drink tea and eat cakes.

The boy thinks about this continually; when waking, when going to sleep, when attending the horses, but

<sup>1</sup> Owing to frequent overstrains, a great number of Russian peasants suffer from chronic hernia. — Tr.

finds no answer. Every one says it is as it should be—and lives accordingly.

So he grows up. He marries. Children are born to him, and they ask the same question, and also wonder; and he answers them as his father answered him.

And they, too, living in poverty and subjection, labor for idle strangers.

So he lives, and so live all around him.

Wherever he goes it is the same; and, according to the stories of the passing pilgrims, it is the same everywhere. Everywhere laborers overwork themselves for idle, rich landlords; suffer from rupture, asthma, consumption; drink in despair; and die before their time. Women overstrain themselves, cooking, washing, mending, tending the cattle; wither, and grow prematurely old, from overpowering and incessant labor.

And everywhere those for whom they work indulge in horses and carriages and pet dogs, conservatories and games, from one year to another; each day from morning till evening dressing as if for a holiday, playing, eating and drinking, as not one of those who work for them could do, even on a holiday.

## II

WHY is this?

The first answer that presents itself to the rural laborer is, that it is owing to the land having been taken from him, and given to those who do not work it. So that the working peasant either has no land, or so little that he cannot support himself and his family on it, and must therefore either starve, or rent the land which adjoins his own but is possessed by those who do not work it; to rent it consenting of necessity to whatever terms are demanded.

So it appears at first sight, but, on second thoughts, there are peasants who have land sufficient to support them, and yet they too, all, or part of them, yield themselves to the same slavery.

Again, why is this?

It is because the peasant needs money to buy plows, scythes, horseshoes, and building materials, oil, tea, sugar, wine, rope, salt, matches, tobacco, and clothes; whereas the money he earns by selling his produce is continually being extorted from him in the shape of taxes direct and indirect, and by increasing the prices of the things he purchases, so that the majority of the peasants cannot procure the money they need otherwise than by selling themselves as wage slaves to those who have money.

And this is what the peasants, their wives and children, do. Some sell themselves in their own neighborhood, others sell themselves far away in the towns as servants, coachmen, wet-nurses, maids, attendants, waiters, and especially as factory workers,—whole families thus removing to the towns. Having sold themselves in the towns in these capacities, country folk lose the habits of agricultural work and simplicity of life; they grow accustomed to town food, clothing, and drink, and by these new habits yet further confirm their bondage.

Thus it is not merely want of land which causes the laborer to become enslaved to the rich; the causes are to be found also in the taxes and the high prices charged for the necessaries of life, and the luxurious town habits to which country laborers become accustomed when they abandon their villages. The present slavery originated in the land being taken away from the laborers, but it is maintained and increased by taxes, and is confirmed and strengthened by the circumstance that men lose the habit of agricultural labor, and become accustomed to town luxuries which can be obtained only by selling themselves as slaves to those who have money. And this slavery is continually spreading, and affirming, and establishing itself more and more.

In villages men live half famished, in increasing toil and privations — slaves of the landowners.

In towns and factories working-men live generation after generation, physically and morally depraved by

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dull, monotonous, unhealthy, and unnatural labor—slaves of the capitalists.

Every year the condition of both classes becomes steadily worse. In the villages peasants are growing more and more destitute as greater numbers leave the country for the factories. In the towns, although the workmen do not get poorer, but, on the contrary, seem to become better off, yet they are growing more and more intemperate, more and more incapable of any other kind of labor than the one they are accustomed to, and are therefore falling more and more into the power of the factory owners.

Thus the power of the landowners and factory owners and of the wealthy classes generally is becoming stronger and stronger, while the condition of the working-men is becoming worse and worse. How can we escape from these conditions, and is any escape possible?

### III

It would seem that deliverance from land slavery could be easily effected. The only thing required would be the recognition of a self-evident truth which men would never have doubted if they were not deceived—namely, that every man that is born has the same right to support himself from the land as he has to the air or the sunlight; and that therefore no man has the right to regard any land he does not cultivate as his own, or to prevent others from cultivating it.

But no Government will ever sanction this freedom, for most of the individuals who form Governments are landowners; and on the possession of this property is based their existence. They know this, and hold tight to their privilege, and defend it.

About thirty years ago Henry George suggested not only a reasonable but a perfectly practicable scheme of emancipating the land from private ownership. But neither in America nor in England (in France it is not even spoken of) has this scheme been accepted. Vari-

ous refutations of it have been attempted, but as they failed the idea was simply boycotted.

If this scheme was not accepted either in England or in America, there is even less hope of its being accepted in autocratic States, such as Germany, Austria, and Russia.

In Russia we have vast expanses of land usurped by private individuals, by the Tsar, and the Imperial family, and there is no hope of these people—who without their right to landed property would feel as helpless as fledglings fallen from their nest—relinquishing or permitting any infringement of their right without struggling to their utmost to maintain it.

Therefore, so long as power remains in the hands of Governments composed of landowners, there will be no emancipation of the land.

Deliverance from taxation is as impossible, and even more so. The whole Government, from its head, the Sovereign, down to the last official, lives by taxation. Therefore the suppression of taxes by Governments themselves is as impossible as the destruction of a man's only means of existence by the man himself.

It is true that some Governments are apparently attempting to relieve the people from the burden of general taxation by means of income taxes drawn from the wealthy classes, increasing such taxes as the income grows. But this transference from one class of taxation to another cannot alleviate the condition of the people, because the monied classes, *i.e.*, merchants, landowners, and capitalists, proportionately with the increase of taxation will augment the prices of rents, land, and all necessities of life, and will lower wages, so that the whole weight of taxation will still be borne by the working-classes.

Numbers of measures have been suggested by contemporary scientists for liberating the working-classes from the slavery caused by the capitalistic appropriation of the instruments of production; in consequence of which measures it is believed that the workmen's wages must continually increase, their working hours continu-

ally decrease, and ultimately all instruments of production must pass from the hands of the masters to those of the workers. The workers thus becoming possessed of all factories and workshops will no longer be obliged to surrender a part of their labor to the capitalist, but will receive full exchange for their toil, and all articles of consumption necessary to their life. This plan has been promulgated in England, America, and Germany for the last thirty years, but until now its realization has not been attained, nor is there the slightest approach to its fulfilment. Trades unions and strikes have been organized, by means of which the working classes sometimes succeed in obtaining higher wages and a reduction of working hours; but as the Governments, bound by the capitalists, do not, and never will, permit the instruments of production to be taken from their present owners, the position remains practically unchanged. And as the men who receive higher pay for less hours increase their requirements, they thus remain in the same slavery.

So it is evident that the slavery of the working-classes will never be abolished while Governments continue: *first*, to maintain landed property in the hands of non-laboring landowners; *second*, to collect direct and indirect taxes; and *third*, to defend and uphold capitalist property.

#### IV

"THE slavery of the working-men is caused by the existence of Governments! If this bondage is the result of the Governments, then, for the necessary emancipation, it is indispensable that the existing Governments should be overthrown, and such new ones established as would grant free use of land, the suppression of taxation, and the transference of capital and factories into the hands and management of the workers."

There are some who proclaim the possibility of such a solution, and prepare for it. But, fortunately (for such action, always connected with violence and mur-

der, is immoral, and detrimental to the end in view, as repeatedly demonstrated in history), such an undertaking is impossible at the present time.

The days are long past when Governments naively believed they were ordained for the welfare of the people and took no measure to insure themselves against revolutions (moreover, they had none of the modern means of communication, telegraphs, telephones, railways), and, consequently, were easily overthrown, as in England in 1640, in France during the Great Revolution and after, and in Germany in '48. Since then there has been only one revolution, in 1871, and that under peculiar circumstances.

At the present day, revolutions and the upsetting of Governments are simply impossible. Impossible because Governments, being now aware of their uselessness and perniciousness, and of the fact that no one any longer believes in their sanctity, are guided only by the instinct of self-preservation, and, using all the means they possess, are continually on their guard against anything which might not only overthrow, but even shake, their authority.

Every Government at the present time has an army of officials united by railways, telegraphs, and telephones; it has fortresses and prisons, with all the newest improvements of photography and anthropometrical measurements; explosive mines, artillery, and rifles, and all the most perfected instruments of coercion in existence. And as soon as any new appliance appears, it is immediately adopted by Governments for their purpose of self-preservation.

They maintain organizations of spies, of bribed clergy, bribed scientists and artists, and a corrupted press. And above all, every Government has at its disposal a mass of officers perverted by patriotism, money, and hypnotism, and millions of physically strong and morally undeveloped twenty-one-year-old children called soldiers; or a conglomeration of hirelings stupefied by discipline and ready for any crime their commanders may direct them to commit.

Therefore it is impossible at the present time to abolish by force a Government which possesses such resources and is continually on its guard. No Government will ever permit it. And as long as Governments exist they will maintain taxation and private ownership of land and capital, because great landowners and capitalists, and officials paid from the taxes, form the Governments.

Every attempt of the working-men to take possession of the land belonging to private owners will certainly end as it has always ended, by soldiers coming and punishing and dispersing those who are endeavoring to get the land. Every attempt to avoid paying taxes will also end in the same way — soldiers will come, will seize what is required to meet the taxes, and severely chastise those who refuse what is demanded. This will also happen to those who will attempt — I do not say to seize the instruments of production and the factories — but even to merely sustain a strike or prevent other workmen from lowering the price of labor; soldiers will come and disperse the offenders, as is always occurring in Europe and Russia.

While soldiers are in the hands of Governments which exist by taxation, and are bound by the owners of land and capital, no revolution is possible. Therefore, so long as Governments have the armies at their command, the system of society will always be in accordance with the wishes of those who have that command.

## V

THE question therefore naturally presents itself — who are these soldiers?

They are the very men who have been robbed of their land, and from whom taxes are extorted, and who are wage slaves to the capitalists.

Why then do these soldiers go against themselves? They cannot do otherwise, because, by a long course of training, so-called "religious" education and hypnotism,

they have been reduced to a state in which they can no longer reason, but only obey.

The Governments, having in their hands the money extorted from the people, bribe with this money various kinds of officials to enlist soldiers, and then hire military commanders to train them (*i.e.*, to deprive these men of their human consciousness), but above all it bribes with this money schoolmasters and clergy, who in various ways instil into children and adults the idea that soldiering—*i.e.*, preparation for murder—is not only an occupation useful to mankind, but a righteous and godly one.

And year after year, although these men see that they and their like contribute to the enslaving of the people by the wealthy and governing classes, they submissively continue to become soldiers, and having done so, uncomplainingly fulfil all that is demanded of them, be it not only the evident ill-treatment of their fellows, but even the murder of their parents.

Bribed officials, military teachers, and the clergy prepare soldiers by stupefying them. Soldiers, at the command of their superiors, and with threats of imprisonment and death, despoil the land of its wealth by means of taxes, and appropriate the profits of factories and commerce in the interests of the ruling classes. In their turn these ruling classes spend part of this money in bribing the officials, military teachers, and clergy,—and so the circle is complete, and no escape is possible.

## VI

THE solution proposed by revolutionists to meet force by force, is manifestly impossible. Governments who already possess a disciplined force will never permit the formation of a similarly disciplined opposing force. All such attempts during the last century show how futile they are.

Nor can the solution be found in the suggestion of certain Socialists: to organize a great economical power

which would be able to overcome the united forces of capitalism. The trades unions will never, with their few millions of money, be able to compete with the economic power of multi-millionaires always upheld by military force.

Equally impracticable is the proposal of other Socialists: that of gaining the majority in Parliaments. No majority in Parliament will be able to carry anything inimical to the Government so long as the Government has the troops at its command. If at any moment the decisions of a Parliament were to threaten the interests of the ruling classes, the Government would dissolve and disperse such a Parliament, as always has been and ever will be the case while the army is in the hands of the Government.

The dissemination of socialistic ideas among the troops will not effect anything. The hypnotism of the army is so cleverly devised that the most free-thinking and intelligent man, while he remains in the army, will always fulfil what is demanded of him.

Escape, therefore, is to be found neither in revolutions nor through Socialism.

If there be a way of escape it is one hitherto unrecognized, which nevertheless can alone undoubtedly abolish the whole complex, ingenious, and ancient governmental machinery for the enslavement of the people.

It consists in refusing to enter the military service while one has not yet become subjected to the stupefying and depraving influence of discipline. This solution is the only one, and at the same time it is the undeniable obligation of every individual. It is the only possible way out, because the existing violence is based on these three actions of Governments: on the spoliation of the people, on the distribution of the stolen money to those who organize the robbery, and on the recruiting of the people into the army.

No private individual can hinder the Government from robbing the people by means of recruited troops; nor can he hinder it from distributing the money collected from the people amongst those whose help is re-

quired for recruiting soldiers and stupefying them; but he can prevent people from becoming soldiers by refusing to be one himself, and by making clear to others the substance of the fraud by which they are persuaded to enter military service.

Not only *can* every separate individual do this, he is *bound* to do it, because enlistment into military service is the renunciation of all religion, whichever a man may have professed (all religions forbid murder), — it is the renunciation of human dignity, and the voluntary submission to a slavery for the one purpose of murder. In this lies the only possible, absolutely necessary and inevitable escape from the slavery in which the ruling classes hold the working people.

The way of escape is neither in destroying force by force, nor in taking possession of the instruments of production, nor in Parliamentary opposition to Governments, but in every man himself, personally, becoming conscious of the truth, professing it, and acting in accordance with it. As to the truth that man must not kill his fellow-man, this is so well recognized that every one is aware of it.

If only men would apply their energies, not to external results, but to that which causes these results, — to their own life, — then the power of violence and evil which at present holds and afflicts humanity would melt like wax before a fire.



# RECENT PRIVATE AND OTHER LETTERS

ON THE RELIGIOUS RELATION TO LIFE

(February 2, 1902)

DEAR N . . ., — I quite agree with what you write. I have been approaching this conviction gradually, and have now definitely reached it, as I have expressed in my article "What is Religion and what is its Essence?"

I disagree with you only in one but very important point: It is true that, at the present time, and especially amongst us in Russia, the Church and State deceit present the chief obstacle to the establishment of or even the approach to the Christian life, but one cannot say that the strife with these deceits represents the chief business of a Christian. The business of a Christian, by the means of which he attains all his purposes, including the one which at present in Russia stands before him, is everywhere and always one: to increase one's fire and let it give light to men. But directing all one's attention, all one's efforts, to some one particular object, as for instance, the life of manual labor, propaganda, or, as in this case, strife with this or that deceit, is always a mistake, like that of a man who, during an inundation, instead of directing the water through the chief outlet or repairing the dike which resists the water, should construct dams in his own street, overlooking the fact that the water will come in from other directions.

When I received your letter I wished to write to you reminding you that in strife one should be as wise as serpents and as meek as doves; but this is not enough: one should not for a moment forget the essential gen-

eral aim, and not let oneself be carried away by efforts to attain one particular object. This does not mean that one should not fight against deceits (when one knows that they are the greatest one will do so involuntarily), but one should fight only when the struggle follows as a result of the general effort toward perfection.

Another comparison. One has to protect houses from the possibility of a fire being communicated to all. One can cut green branches and stick them into the earth between the houses. And this may appear to be effective for a day or two. One can also plant small trees, and when they take root and grow up, this will be effective permanently.

It is necessary that our activity should have roots. And these roots are in our submissiveness to the will of God, in our personal life being dedicated to perfecting oneself and increasing love.

My physical health continues to be bad, but spiritually I feel very well, and I can work and do work as well as I am able, more seriously in view of the approaching end.

TO THE SWEDISH GROUP OF SCIENTISTS, WRITERS, AND  
ARTISTS, WHO HAD EXPRESSED THEIR REGRET THAT  
THE NOBEL PRIZE WAS NOT GIVEN TO TOLSTOI

*(February 2, 1902)*

GENTLEMEN, — The fact that the Nobel Prize was not accorded to me was doubly pleasant: first, because it saved me from the painful necessity of dealing in some way with money, — generally regarded as very necessary and useful, but which I regard as the source of every kind of evil; and secondly, because it has afforded to people whom I respect the opportunity of expressing their sympathy with me, for which I thank you all from my heart.

## TO A PERSONAL FRIEND

*(December 15, 1901)*

(This letter refers to a revolutionary pamphlet appealing to workmen to take up arms against the Government, secretly circulated in Russia in large numbers. — Eds.)

THE pamphlet about street disturbances is very pitiful. Besides being immoral it is impracticable and simply stupid. If I were the Government I should publish such pamphlets at the expense of the State and spread them in millions of copies. Nothing could more radically undermine or render impossible the confidence of the people in those who share the views expressed in this and similar publications.

The proposal of the pamphlet is immoral, because while a soldier has been brought by a whole series of hypnotic suggestions to the condition where he is obliged either to kill or to suffer martyrdom, and is besides so bewildered that he does not see the sin of what he is doing — the man who would obey the author of this pamphlet would be preparing for murder and committing it of his own free will, incited by nothing but the author's very doubtful assertions of the temporal advantages for himself and his brothers of his murderous action.

The proposal is impracticable, because it is inconceivable that unarmed, undisciplined men could ever disarm armed and disciplined men ; and if it were to happen anywhere, — the unlikely chances of which are nine hundred and ninety-nine to one, — then those who succeeded would immediately be crushed by regular military forces from other parts.

And it is stupid because if those people who wish to liberate themselves from murder and preparation for murder were to begin to prepare for murder themselves, they would give their foe the only legitimate excuse for using against them all kinds of violence, and even murder, and of excusing all those committed previously.

I do *not* think it is necessary to make a declaration that I am not in agreement with those who share the views of this pamphlet which advocates street disturbances. For nearly thirty years now I have been repeating from all sides one and the same thing — that the whole matter lies in the spiritual condition of men, that all violence is a sin, and that the violence of those who fight against violence is absolutely senseless. And therefore no sincere man will confound me with revolutionary coercionists; as to an insincere man being able to invent against me any calumny which may be needful to him, against this there is no means of safeguarding oneself; and besides, it is not necessary.

#### TO AN ITALIAN PRESS CORRESPONDENT

(*September 22, 1901*)

My reply to your first question, as to "What the Russian people think of the Franco-Russian alliance?" is this: The Russian people — the real people — have not the slightest idea of the existence of this alliance; but even if they knew about it, I am certain that as all nations are for them all the same, their common sense as well as their feeling of humanity would suggest to them that this exclusive alliance with one particular nation in preference to all others can have no other object than to drag them into enmity and perhaps war with other nations, and therefore that this alliance would be abhorrent to them in the highest degree.

To the question, "Does the Russian nation share the enthusiasm of the French?" I think I can answer not only that the Russian people do not share this enthusiasm (if indeed it really exists, of which I am doubtful), but if they knew all that is done and said in France about this alliance they would rather experience a feeling of suspicion and antipathy to the nation which without any rational reason suddenly begins to manifest toward them an unexpected and exclusive love.

Concerning the third question, "What is the significance of this alliance for civilization in general?" I think I am right in presuming that as this alliance can have no other object than war or threats of war against other nations, it cannot fail to be harmful. As to the significance of this alliance for the two nationalities concerned, it is clear that as in the past so also in the future it will be positive evil for both. The French Government, the Press, and all that portion of French Society which praises this alliance, have already been and will still further be drawn into concessions and compromises contrary to the traditions of a free and humane nation, in order to pretend or really to be in agreement with the intention and feelings of the most despotic, retrograde, and cruel Government of all Europe. And this has been and will be a great injury to France. Whereas for Russia this alliance has already had and will still have, if it continues, a yet more pernicious influence. Since the establishment of this ill-fated alliance, the Russian Government, which once was afraid of European opinion and took it into consideration, at present no longer troubles itself about it, being conscious of the support of this strange friendship on the part of the nation which is regarded as the most civilized in the world, and it is daily becoming more and more reactionary, despotic, and cruel. So that this strange and unfortunate alliance cannot in my opinion have any other than the most negative influence on the welfare of both nations as well as on civilization in general.

#### TO A SWISS PASTOR

*(August 26, 1901)*

DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, and thank you for the feelings which you express in it. I am also very thankful to you for the extracts from A. Sabatier. I regret very much that I am acquainted only by name with this remarkable man. The extracts you quote

concerning his understanding of Christianity prove to me that I ought to be in complete unity of thought and feeling with him, as well as with you and all who share your views.

There is, however, one point in which I do not agree with you, namely, your idea as to the necessity of a Church, and, therefore, of ministers. That is, of persons invested with a certain authority. I cannot forget the 8th and 9th verses of the 23d chapter of Matthew, not because these verses are from the Gospel, but because it is for me a perfectly evident truth that there cannot be any ministers, teachers, and guides, amongst Christians, and that it is precisely this transgression of the Gospel law which has hitherto almost completely nullified the meaning of the true Christian teaching.

To my mind the chief meaning of the Christian teaching is the establishment of direct communion between God and man. Every man who takes upon himself the rôle of intercessor in this communion hinders those he wishes to guide from entering into direct communion with God, and, which is still worse, he himself completely loses the possibility of living in a Christian way. I think it is the height of pride, a sin which more than anything else estranges one from God—to say to oneself “I am capable of helping others to live well, and of saving their souls.” All that a man can do who wishes to follow the Christian teaching is to endeavor to perfect himself to the full measure of his strength, to use in this work of self-perfection all his powers, all his energy. This is the only method of influencing one's neighbors and of helping them on the way of righteousness.

If a Church does exist it is given to no one to know its limits, and no one can know whether he belongs to it or not. The most that a man can desire or hope is to strive to become a part of it (this Church), but no one can be certain that he has indeed become a part, and even less can he imagine that he has the possibility and the right of guiding others.

I beg you to excuse the blunt way in which I have

expressed my opinion contrary to yours, and to believe in the feelings of sympathy and respect with which I remain at your service.

TO A RUSSIAN PRIEST

(August 15, 1901)

DEAR BROTHER T . . . ,—Your letter afforded me great pleasure. You are the fourth priest in whom I meet a complete sympathy, not with my views, but with the essence of the teaching of Jesus, the true meaning of which is accessible to children and cannot call forth differences. And this is very joyful.

One thing in your letter gave me a little anxiety. It is your allusion to metaphysics and the Church. I am afraid you have yourself built up some system of metaphysics, or that you adhere to the Church metaphysics, which affords you the possibility of remaining a priest though holding your views. Judging by the fact that you have been in orders for ten years I conclude that you are yet a young man, and might be my son if not grandson; and, therefore, I will allow myself to give you unsolicited advice as to how, in my opinion, a priest ought to act who has freed himself from superstition, and understood the teaching of Jesus in its true meaning, and wishes to follow it.

When men find themselves in a position incompatible with the teaching of Jesus (as a soldier, or a priest, for instance), they construct or accept some complicated, confused system of metaphysics which is intended to justify that position. It is from this snare that I wish to warn you. For a Christian there can be no such complicated metaphysics. All that one can call metaphysics in the Christian teaching consists of the simple, universally comprehensible proposition that "All men are the sons of God—Brothers; and therefore should love both their Father and their brothers, and accordingly behave with others as they would wish others to behave with them." I think that all further metaphysics are from the Evil One, and are invented only

to reconcile the incompatible position we are in with the Christian teaching. There are also priests (I know such) who, feeling the incompatibility of their position with the pure understanding of the Christian teaching, try to justify themselves by the consideration that in their position they can better struggle with superstition and spread the Christian truth. I think such an assertion is even more false. In a religious cause the end cannot justify the means, were it only for this reason — that means which diverge from the truth destroy all possibility of attaining an end which consists of the teaching of truth. But above all, no man is called to teach others (Matt. xxiii. 8-9), but only to strive to make himself perfect in truth and love. And only by such striving (without any thought of influencing others) can man influence others.

Pardon me that I contravene statements you have not said and perhaps do not think, but having received a strong and joyful impression from your letter I wished to express all that I think about the tragic position of a priest who has learnt the truth, and of the way out of this position, and of its dangers.

The best solution of this position, an heroic way, is, I think, that the priest having called together his parishioners should come out to them on to the rostrum, and instead of conducting the service and bowing to the *ikons*, should bow down to the ground to the people, begging them to pardon him for having led them into error.

The next solution is that which was chosen ten years ago by a remarkable man, now dead, a priest from the College of Viatka, whom I knew, and who served in the diocese of —. He declared to his Bishop that owing to a change of views he could not continue to be a priest. He was called to Stavropol, and the authorities and his family so tormented him that he consented to resume his priestly office. But in less than a year he could no longer bear it, and again refused, and gave up his orders. His wife abandoned him. All these sufferings so exhausted him that he



died, like a saint, without betraying his convictions and above all without losing love.

This is the second solution. But I know how terribly difficult it is owing to the family relations and to the circumstances of priests, and therefore I quite understand and do not at all condemn a priest who might remain in this position, notwithstanding that he no longer believes in his work. The only thing I have to say, and which I allow myself to advise (I advise the same thing to those Christians from whom military service is demanded), is that I should not use my reason to invent devices which make it appear that whilst doing what is wrong I am doing well.

If man only keeps the truth before his eyes in all its purity, is not untruthful to himself, then he will find a way to act in the best manner according to his strength. A priest who understands the true Christian teaching, should, I think, like every other Christian, firstly, strive to know the truth in its purity and completeness, independently of his position; and, secondly, to reform his position in the direction of the truth he has seen, according to his strength. (This approach is made of itself if the man is sincere.) As to how far a man will approach (for a priest this is especially difficult, his position being not only distant from, but contrary, hostile to, the truth), to what extent, and how he will approach—this is a matter between himself and God, concerning which outsiders cannot judge.

I greet you fraternally, — Yours, with love.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE MANCHESTER TOLSTOI  
SOCIETY

(August 15, 1901)

DEAR FRIEND, — You were right in guessing that I should be interested in the Tolstoi Society. So I was. But I am sorry that I have enough vanity left to be interested. I have always held the opinion — and it

cannot change — that to be a member of the old Society started by God at the beginning of conscious humanity is more profitable for oneself and for mankind than to be a member of the limited Societies which we organize for the sake of attaining the ends we are able to conceive. I think the preference we give to our own Societies is due to the fact that the part we play in them seems to us of much greater importance than the one we play in God's Great Society. But this is an illusion only : all the three modes of activity which you mention in your letter will be more surely attained by a man who regards himself as a member of God's Great Society than by a member of Tolstor's Society. Such a man who is earnest, as I know you are, will, firstly, spread as much as he can the ideas that gave him peace of Conscience and energy in life without minding whether they are Tolstor's or anybody else's.

He will, secondly, try with all his might to induce people to speak their mind on the most important questions of life.

He will, thirdly, try to give every person with whom he comes in contact as much joy and happiness as it is in his power to do, and will also help those who get into difficulties through strictly following the teaching of Christ.

A man belonging to God's Great Society will also perform many other useful Christian acts which have neither been foreseen nor formulated by Tolstor's or any other Society.

I own there are some advantages in the union of persons of the same mind who form societies ; but the drawbacks of such organizations are much greater than their advantages, I think. And so I think that for myself it would be a great loss to change my membership of God's Great Society for the most seemingly useful participation in any human Society.

I am very sorry, dear friend, to differ from your opinion, but I cannot think otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written in English. — Fds.

TO A . . . M . . . ON THE SAME SUBJECT

(October 5, 1901)

I HAVE received the letters,<sup>1</sup> and have, of course, read them with great interest. . . . Please transmit to them that not only have I nothing against the existence and the name of a Tolstoi Society, — the lower part of my being feels pleasure at the idea that my writings will be the subject of the attention of religious people and will be better understood; but that which is highest in me opposes this thought, and as I myself desire to be free from all bonds and all exclusiveness in order that nothing should distract me from direct immediate communion with God, so also I should desire the same for my friends near to me in spirit. Tell them that what I wrote to them I wrote guided by love, and that I was glad to see from their letters that they are aware of the danger accompanying all exclusiveness, of which I had warned them.

AN EARLIER LETTER AND A DIARY ENTRY ON  
"TOLSTOÏISM"

To speak of "Tolstoïism," to seek guidance, to inquire about my solution of questions, is a great and a gross error.

There has not been, nor is there, any "teaching" of mine. There exists only the one eternal universal teaching of the Truth, which, for me, for us, is especially clearly expressed in the Gospels. This teaching invites man to accept his sonship to God, and therefore his freedom or his subjection (call it as you like)—freedom from the influence of the world, and subjection to God, to His will; and as soon as man has understood this teaching he fully enters into direct communion with God and has no longer anything to ask of any one.

<sup>1</sup> Of the members of the Society. — TR.

It is like a man who has to descend a river which has overflowed and flooded the surrounding fields. While the man is not in the center of the stream but in its flooded parts, he himself has either to swim or to row, and here he may be guided by other swimmers. Here I could help to direct others while myself approaching the bed of the stream. But the moment we have entered the channel there is not, nor can there be, any guide. We are all borne down by the power of the current, all in one direction, and those who were behind may turn out in front.

If a man asks which way he should swim, it only proves that he has not yet reached the bed of the stream, and that the one whom he asks is a bad guide, since he has not been able to bring him to it, *i.e.*, to that position in which one cannot ask because it is senseless to ask. How can I ask whither one should advance, when the stream with irresistible power is carrying me along in a joyful direction?

Men who submit to a leader, who believe and obey him, are undoubtedly straying in the dark together with their leader.

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The other day a girl came to me asking the question (so usual, so artificial), What must she do to be useful? Talking with her it became clear to me that the great evil from which millions suffer is not so much that they live in positive wickedness as that they do not live according to their own conscience. Instead of their own conscience people take some other person's conscience, higher than their own (Christ's most frequently), and being obviously without power to live according to this other conscience they conform neither to that nor to their own and so live without conscience. I advised this young lady to live not by my conscience, as she wished, but by her own. But she, poor girl, does not even know whether she has a conscience of any kind or not. This is a great evil, and it is most important that men should develop, make clear to themselves, their conscience, and then live

according to that conscience; and not, as all do, choose another person's conscience unattainable to themselves, and then live without conscience, and lie, lie, lie for the sake of appearing to live wholly in conformity with this other selected person's conscience.

I therefore truly prefer a man without principles, a pleasure-loving, unreasoning man, who resists discussion, to one who lives according to another one's conscience and is therefore without any conscience. The former may develop a conscience; the latter never, unless he return to the independence of the former.

#### TO A PERSIAN

*(July 24, 1901)*

I AM very thankful for the poem you have sent me. It is of the highest interest, and I think that the propagation of the idea it contains will be very useful not only to the people of your country but also to the inhabitants of all countries. I quite share the idea expressed by the writer — that in order to cure evil one should find its cause, and try to destroy THAT. He says that the cause of evil is egotism and ignorance. But I should like to add, however, to the word ignorance — “ignorance of true religion.” By true religion I mean a religion which is within the reach of all, founded upon reason common to all, and therefore obligatory on every one.

The principle of this religion is expressed in the Gospel by the words: “Do unto others as thou wouldst wish that others should do unto thee.” This is the law and the prophets. If this principle were recognized as the chief religious principle by all men, then egotism, which is the readiness to sacrifice one's neighbors' welfare to attain one's own ends, would disappear of itself. So that I recognize as the cause of evil in general, and of wars in particular, solely the IGNORANCE OF TRUE RELIGION.

Nor do I altogether agree with you with regard to the brotherhood you suppose possible between States and their rulers. I think that the State which is formed and maintained always by violence not only excludes brotherhood but is its direct contrary.

If men are brothers there can be neither emperor, nor minister, nor general, nor subject, nor soldier. Amongst brothers no one can have the right to command, nor the duty to obey. All must obey God — not men, whose orders are mostly contrary to the law of God.

According to my opinion wars will only cease when every individual has imbibed the religious principle of not doing to others that which he does not want them to do to him, to such an extent that no one will feel able to accept military service; because military service is nothing else than preparation for murder, the act most contrary of all to the principle of reciprocity; because every man prizes his life above everything, and, therefore, to desire to take it from him is to do to another what one least desires done to oneself.

I think that everywhere there are men who profess the true religion, like the Bâbists in Persia, and that notwithstanding the persecutions to which these men are everywhere and always exposed, their ideas will spread more and more, and triumph in the end over the barbarity and ferocity of Governments, and especially over the frauds which Governments try to maintain on their peoples. It will not be the Governments which will abolish war. On the contrary Governments will always endeavor to excite national hatreds in order to render necessary the armies which alone constitute their power and their reason for existence.

Wars can be abolished only by the individuals who suffer by them. They will be abolished only when true religion is so widely spread that the majority of men will be ready to suffer violence rather than commit it, and will render war absolutely impossible by refusing military service.

## TO THE EDITOR OF A HINDOO PAPER

*(July, 1901)*

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your interesting letter. I quite agree with you that your nation cannot accept the solution of the social problem which Europe offers it, and which in reality is not a solution.

A society or collection of men founded on force is not only in a primitive state, but also in a very dangerous position. The connection which unites such a society can at any time be sundered, and the greatest calamities overtake it. All European States are in this position.

The only solution of the social problem for rational beings gifted with the capacity of love consists in the abolition of force, and in the organization of a society founded on mutual respect and rational principles voluntarily accepted by all. Such a condition can be obtained only by the development of true religion. By this term I imply the fundamental principles of all religions, which are: First, the consciousness of the divine essence of the human soul; and, secondly, regard for its manifestation.

Your religion is very ancient, and very profound in its metaphysical definition of the relation of man to the spiritual All—to "Atman"; but I think it has been perverted in its moral, *i.e.*, practical, adaptation to life owing to the existence of caste. This practical adaptation to life was, as far as I know, established by the Jainists, Buddhists, and some other sects, such as Kabir Panchis, in which the fundamental rule is the sanctity of life and therefore the prohibition of taking the life of any living being, especially man.

All the evil which you experience, — starvation, and, more important still, the humiliation of your nation by factory life, will continue as long as your people consent to become soldiers. Parasites feed only upon unclean bodies. Your nation must conserve its moral purity,

and in the degree in which it will be pure from murder, or readiness for murder, in that degree will it be free from the *régime* from which it at present suffers. I quite agree with you that you ought to be thankful to the English for all they have done for you—for your welfare—and that you should assist them in all that leads to the civilization of your nation; but you should not help Englishmen in their "Government by Coercion," and under no consideration participate in an organization founded on violence.

Therefore it seems to me that the duty of every educated Hindoo consists in the abolition of all the old superstitions which conceal from the masses the elements of true religion, *i.e.*, the consciousness of the divine essence of the human soul and regard for the life of every living being without exception, and in spreading these principles as much as possible.

I think that these principles are implied, if not actually contained, in your ancient and profound religion, and require only further development and liberation from the covering which conceals them. I think that only such a mode of action can relieve the Hindoos from those evils to which they are subjected, and will serve as the most effective means for attaining the aim toward which you are striving.

Pardon me for so frankly expressing my opinion, and believe me, — Yours truly.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BULGARIAN PAPER "FREE  
THOUGHT," CONCERNING THE FATE OF A YOUNG  
MAN WHO HAD BEEN TORTURED IN THE PENAL  
BATTALION FOR REFUSING MILITARY SERVICE ON  
RELIGIOUS GROUNDS

(1901)

FROM your letter I can see that the Bulgarian Government is not only brutal and cruel, but also strikingly stupid. (I say the Government, because I am sure that were it not for the demands of the higher Government



the lower officials would not have dealt in so barbarously cruel a way with this youth, who should at least inspire sympathy and respect.) It is comprehensible that the Governments of large States such as France, Germany, and the most foul Government of my country, can and even must act cruelly with such men as Shopof, who by their life and actions indicate the way of moral progress along which humanity is advancing. They (*i.e.*, these Governments) have no other choice, being maintained by brute force (while moral progress consists in substituting for brute force the consciousness of the brotherhood of men); and, therefore, such Governments must repress all manifestations of true progress, as they do, from the instinct of self-preservation. But small nationalities and States, such as Bulgaria, Servia, Switzerland, and others, obviously can attain nothing by brute force. In the struggle by force they will always be crushed by States immeasurably more powerful — by Austria, Germany, England, and Russia.

The rôle of small nationalities does not consist in monkey-like imitations of the large States, addicting themselves to militarism and all the horrors and cruelties connected with it (as we see they do, be it only in this little case with Shopof), but, being free from the burden and brutality of war, in their advancing, according to their power, along the way of moral progress, and indicating this way to the great nations.

This is what Germany did — although not so much in the way of moral, as of esthetic and scientific progress — when she was divided into little duchies and had not yet tasted the poison of brute force which spiritually killed her. Thus Switzerland acts, by showing men an example and the possibility of a combination of freedom and good order.

How well it would be if your Bulgarian nation be-thought itself in time, and instead of raising an army, strengthening its discipline, and torturing men, merely that it should not remain behind its straying neighbors who imitate the big nations, and fighting them — if your good, industrious, capable nation were to use all

its strength to establish at home freedom and equality, thus serving as an example for others, instead of trying to do something it can't do—frighten its neighbors with its disciplined army. How well this would be!

Whereas such actions as the torture of Shopof not only cover with ignominy the Government which commits them, but also inspire a bad opinion of the society which tacitly submits to such dishonest things. Shopof is intentionally being tortured as a soldier, whereas he from the very beginning refused to be enlisted in the Army; and that not out of caprice or unwillingness to be useful to men, but because military service, having murder for its object, is not compatible with that Christian teaching professed both by the People and the Government of Bulgaria. And therefore the trial of Shopof as of a soldier who has violated discipline is a lie and a fraud, perpetrated by the Government and its slaves toward a helpless, honest man. Even placing oneself on the standpoint of this Government, which may fear that no one will serve in the Army if it leave unpunished Shopof's refusal, it is clear that all it can do, not only for the maintenance of justice, but also from the instinct of self-preservation, is to compel him to go through some social service not in opposition to his faith.

## ON REASON, FAITH, AND PRAYER

*(January, 1901)*

### I. — REASON

You ask me what my Christian creed is. You have read my "Short Exposition of the Gospels," and you know, therefore, how I understand the teaching of Jesus.

If, however, you wish to know what I consider the essential meaning of the teaching: in my opinion the essential meaning, which I should like to transmit to all

mankind, and in which I wish all children could be educated, consists in this, that *man has come into the world not by his own will but by the will of Him that sent him*. And that man should know what He who sent him into this world requires, reason has been bestowed on him, by the help of which, if he truly desire it, he can always know the will of God—he can always know what He who sent him into the world requires of him.

The Pharisees and Scribes of our time always say that one should not believe in reason, because it will deceive, but that one should believe them and they will not deceive. But what they say is untrue. If one believes in men, and, as the Gospels say, “in the traditions of men,” then we shall all crawl astray from each other like blind puppies, and hate each other, as we do now: the Christian Churchman hates the Mohammedan, the Mohammedan hates the Christian, and the Christians themselves hate each other; the (Greek) Orthodox hates the Catholic, the Old Believer<sup>1</sup> hates the Orthodox, and so on; but if we adhere to the voice of our reason, we shall all unite, because reason is one and the same for all, and reason alone unites men and does not hinder the manifestation of the mutual love natural to them.

Reason unites us, not only with our contemporaries, but with men who lived two thousand years before us, and with those who will live after us. Thus we profit by all that has been produced by the reason of Isaiah, and Jesus, and Buddha, and Socrates, and Confucius, and of all the men who lived before us and believed in reason and served it. “Act toward others as thou wouldst wish them to act toward thee; do not revenge thyself against those who do evil unto thee, but return good for evil; be abstinent, chaste; not only refrain from killing people, but be not angry against them; keep peace with all,” and much else. All this is the product of reason, and all this has been preached equally

<sup>1</sup> An ancient Russian sect. — TR.

by Buddhists, Confucianists, Christians, Taoists, and the Greek and the Egyptian sages. It is also preached by all good people of our time, and all agree with it.

And, therefore, I repeat, the chief meaning of the Christian teaching consists, in my opinion, in what is expressed in the Gospels, in the parable of the Workmen in the Vineyard, for whose use a garden had been given under condition of a payment to the owner, but who imagined it their own; and in the parable of the Talents, where the meaning is that men must fulfil the will of Him who sent them into life, which will consists in men becoming perfect, "as their Heavenly Father," as it is said in another place; *i.e.*, in approaching as near as they can to supreme perfection.

That the will of God consists only in this is also demonstrated to us by reason, and so clearly that there can be no dissension nor doubt. Every man who has thought of it cannot but see that in all the undertakings of life man does and will meet obstacles, and that only in this work (perfection) need man meet no obstacle; that is, in perfecting himself, clearing his soul from evil, and doing good to all that lives. Neither is this work arrested, destroyed, nor hindered by death, which stops, destroys, and renders meaningless all other worldly undertakings. Death neither arrests nor destroys this work, because the man who fulfils the will of Him who sent him, knowing that what he does is necessary to the Master, peacefully performs it here as long as he has the power, and knows that death destroys neither himself nor his relation to the Master, but that "there" also, although in quite different form, he will be in the same dependence on the Master, and have the same joy of a continually growing participation in the life and the work of the Master, *i.e.*, God.

It is thus I understand the teaching of Jesus; thus would I wish it to be understood by all; and in this I wish all children could be educated. Not to blindly believe the things told them about God and life; and to believe the things they do believe, not because they are told they are the utterances of prophets, or Christ, but

because their reason tells them they are true. Reason is older and more reliable than all the writings and all the traditions. It existed even when there were no traditions and no writings, and it is given to each of us direct from God.

The Gospel statement that all sins shall be pardoned except the sin against the Holy Ghost, in my opinion refers directly to the assertion that one should not believe in reason. Indeed, if we do not believe in the reason given us from God, in what shall we believe? Are we to believe those very men who wish to compel us to accept what is inconsistent with the reason given us by God?

## II.—FAITH

You ask, what will give a weak, degenerated, depraved man (as we all are), amidst the snares surrounding him on all sides — what will give such a man the power to live a Christian life?

Instead of answering, and before answering, this question, I will ask you, What does it really mean?

We have become so accustomed to the question that it appears quite natural and intelligible, whereas it is not only not natural and not intelligible, but exceedingly strange and curious for every rational man not educated in the superstitions of the Church faith.

Why doesn't the smith hammering iron, or the peasant plowing the field, ask where he will obtain the strength to do the work he has undertaken, but instead does it to the best of his strength, makes mistakes, tries to correct them, becomes tired, halts, leaves his work for a time, rests, and again betakes himself to it? Is not every servant of God in the same position, when trying to live the Christian life, to fulfil the will of God he has become conscious of? Just in the same way such a man, if he be sincere, will live a Christian life to the best of his strength — obey the will of God, and if he makes mistakes will correct himself, will become tired, and rest, and again betake himself to the

same life-work — that of approaching to the best of his strength that perfection of the Heavenly Father indicated to him.

The question as to where one should get the strength for the Christian life only shows that some one has persuaded men that certain means exist, by whose aid men, without their own incessant efforts, strife, without falls, repentance, upheavals, again falls, and again upheavals, can obtain the necessary strength for a good, saintly life. It is this very superstition, that man does not approach perfection by his own slow efforts, but can purify himself all at once and become a saint, which is one of the most terrible and pernicious errors, — and it is this which is strenuously preached by all the Churches. Some assure their disciples that through the sacraments of baptism, confession, communion, man is freed from sin; others affirm that one is freed from sin by faith in the redemption, because the Christ-God has purified us with his blood. Both the one and the other teach that besides this we are purified by petitionary prayer to God that He should pardon our sins and make us good — and not that we should ourselves strive to become better.

This superstition is very pernicious because it contains a deceit.

The deceit consists, firstly, in the supposition that man can become quite pure and saintly; whereas for a living man this is impossible. Man cannot be perfect and sinless; he can only more or less *approach* perfection, regarding this approach as the sole meaning of his life. I even think that life after death will again consist only in advance toward perfection, although in a completely different form. In this personal effort toward perfection lies the whole meaning and joy of life. And therefore if perfection were attainable by external means we should be deprived of the very essence of life.

A deceit, secondly, because through it man's efforts are withdrawn from the thing he has to do — from improving himself — and are directed toward something unnecessary. To rely on sacraments, or belief in

the redemption, or prayer, contributing to the perfecting of oneself, is like a smith, while holding in his hands the iron and the hammer, and possessing an anvil and a well-lighted fire, trying to devise some other means of forging the iron besides striking it with a hammer, or praying to God to give him the strength to do the work.

One might pray to God, and devise other means for perfecting oneself, in the event of obstacles being put before us in this work and if we ourselves had not the strength for it. But in this work of perfecting oneself, or the Christian life, or the fulfilment of the will of God, God does not demand of us something we cannot do, — on the contrary He has taken care to give us all we are in need of for fulfilling His will.

'We are here in this world as in a wayside inn in which the master has arranged everything really needful to us travelers, and has gone away himself leaving instructions how we should behave in this temporary shelter. All that we require is within our reach! Then what other means should we devise, and for what should we pray? We have only *to obey our instructions*! So also in our spiritual life: all that we require is given us, and the rest is in our own hands.

It is clear that if we wish to become saints all of a sudden, or to feel ourselves justified, and desire besides this to be rich — if we desire that our friends and ourselves shall not be subject to disease or to death, and that we shall always have good harvests, and that our foes shall be destroyed — then we, too, must ask all this of God as it is done in our churches.

But God has not destined us to anything of this kind. He not only has not ordained us to be perfectly righteous and sinless, but on the contrary He has given us a life the meaning of which consists only in our liberating ourselves from our sins, and so *approaching* toward Him. And He has not destined us to be rich, diseaseless, and deathless, but has given us trials, in the form of poverty, disease, the death of our friends and of ourselves — for the very purpose of teaching us to center our lives not in wealth, health, and this temporary exist-

ence, but in serving Him. And He has given us foes not in order that we should desire their ruin, but that we should learn to overcome them by love. He has given us a law of such a nature that it is always well with us if we fulfil it.

So that we have no need to invent any special means of salvation, nor to ask God for anything. All that we require is given us, if only we follow the instructions both of our conscience, and of God as expressed in the Gospels.

The third deceit, an especially pernicious one, consists in this, that the people who have come to believe that they cannot fulfil the will of God and live well by their own efforts, cease to labor at self-improvement; and not only this, but they lose the possibility of self-perfection. A man need only persuade himself that he cannot do something he has to do, and his hands become helpless, and he will indeed be unable to do what is necessary. A man need only become persuaded that he is ill, and he will be ill. Hysterical subjects feel impelled to scream because they believe they are forced to scream. Habitual drunkards do not recover, because they are persuaded they cannot abstain. There is no more immoral and pernicious teaching than that man cannot perfect himself by his own efforts.

This argument, that for a good Christian life one's own efforts are insufficient, and that some kind of external power is necessary, is like the assertion that reason is not sufficient to obtain knowledge of the truth, but that external indubitable proofs are necessary, which I mentioned in my first letter. In the former case, it is supposed beforehand that something or other exists which will give man the power to live a Christian life and to fulfil the will of God. In the latter case, it is supposed that something exists by which a man can ascertain positively that that which he is told is the absolute truth. It is supposed that some kind of means exists for ascertaining truth, independently of one's personal exertions of reason, and that, complete and absolute truth. But this is as impossible as it is to see the



light without eyes. Truth is ascertained by effort, and cannot be ascertained by any other means. And truth ascertained by man's reason can never be perfect, but only more or less approximate to absolute truth. So that "truth" may be the highest truth accessible to man at a given time, but it can never be absolute and positive truth for all times. No proposition can be an absolute truth for all time, were it only for this, that the life of all mankind, as well as that of individual man, is engaged in, and even consists of, the attainment of more and more perfect truth.

The erroneous and absurd idea that human reason cannot by its own efforts *approach* the Truth, proceeds from the same kind of terrible superstition as the one which asserts that man cannot approach the fulfilment of the will of God without external help. The essence of this superstition consists in the supposition that the complete, perfect truth has presumably been revealed by God Himself: to the Jews it was revealed on Mount Sinai, and then by various prophets; to Christians — by Christ, the Apostles, the Councils, the Church; to the Brahmans, in the Vedas; to the Buddhists, in the Tripitaka; to the Mohammedans, in the Koran.

This superstition is evil, firstly, because it distorts the very idea of truth; secondly, because once one has admitted as positive truth all the absurdities and horrors which are accepted as the revelation of God in the Scriptures, one has to keep on distorting common sense more and more in order to justify all these horrors and absurdities; and thirdly, because having accepted an infallible, external revelation as the source of truth, man ceases to believe in the only means to the knowledge of truth — the exertions of his reason. The man who acts thus is like one who, in search of a road, shuts his eyes and surrenders to the guidance of the first stranger who offers to show him the way, instead of exerting himself to the utmost to find it.

It is said, "How can one believe in reason when we see that people who are guided by it fall into error?" Protestants, guided by reason, split up into numberless

faiths, and even one and the same man, trusting himself to reason, passes from one teaching to another. Therefore," it is said, "reason may be mistaken, and one cannot trust it."

But why so? When man believed in one Something, and his reason pointed out nothing more true, he was conscious of the highest truth accessible to him, and was right. Then he became conscious of a higher truth, and was right in acknowledging it. So also was he right when he became conscious of a yet higher and purer truth. The highest, clearest, truest, which man can see and contemplate, that is for him the Truth.

It may be well and desirable, very possibly, that all men should suddenly recognize one and the same Perfect Truth (although if this were so life would cease), but even were we to admit that this might be desirable, — things do not occur as we would like. It might be very desirable (to unreasonable people) that man should not suffer sicknesses, or that some means should exist which should cure him from all diseases; or that all men should speak the same tongue. But this will not take place merely because we imagine that all men can be cured by our remedy, or that all men can speak and understand Russian. If we do imagine this we only make things worse for ourselves, just as we only make it worse for ourselves when we imagine that the complete and eternal Truth is revealed to us in the Scriptures, in tradition, or in the Church.

This might have been imagined at the beginning of Christianity, when one faith appeared possible; but in our time, when by our sides we can see people of the most various religions all imagining that the complete and eternal Truth is revealed to them and not to us — to imagine that precisely we, who have been born in our faith, possess the complete Truth, as the Buddhists, Mohammedans, Catholics, Taoists, and others imagine — is especially foolish.

So mistaken an idea is especially harmful, because it disunites men more than anything else. Men ought to go on uniting closer and closer, as Jesus teaches, and as

our reason and heart indicate. But dogmas about "revelations" *disunite* men more and more.

Besides this, one should understand also that if man believes in revelation he believes so only because reason has told him that he should believe in such or such a revelation — the Mohammedan, Buddhist, or Christian. Whether we desire it or not, no truth can enter man's mind independently of his reason. Reason is like the sieves attached to the threshing machines, so that one cannot get the grain otherwise than through the sieve. It may be that chaff has passed and still passes through the sieve, but there is no other way of getting the grain. And if we imagine that we can have pure grain without sifting, then we deceive ourselves, and fill ourselves with chaff instead of bread, as Churchmen do.

So that we should not imagine everything is happening as we would like, but remember that everything follows laws established by God. And human life has been so ordained by God that men cannot grasp the whole truth, but are continually approaching it; and by comprehending it more and more clearly they are mutually more and more being drawn together.

You ask my opinion about the person of Jesus; whether I regard him as God; about his birth; about future life; about whom I understand by Scribes and Pharisees; and about the holy communion.

I regard Jesus as the same kind of man we all are, and I believe it to be the greatest sacrilege and an evident proof of heathenism, to regard him as God. To consider Jesus as God is to renounce God.

Jesus I regard as man, but his teaching I regard as Divine, in so far as it expresses Divine truths. I know no higher teaching. It has given me life, and I try as far as I can to follow it.

About the birth of Jesus I know nothing, nor do I need to know.

About future life we know that it does exist, that life does not end with death. As to what that life will be it is not given us to know, because it is not necessary to us.

By Pharisees I mean principally the priesthood. By Scribes I mean men of science who do not believe in God.

Concerning the eating of the body and the drinking of the blood, I think this passage in the Gospel the least important, and that it signifies either imbibing the teaching, or a commemoration, but that neither in the one case nor the other has it any importance; nor does it signify what the Church fanatics understand by it. I have expressed my understanding of this passage as well as I could in the "Short Exposition of the Gospels" (*Gospel in Brief*).

### III. — PRAYER

IN my last letter I wrote about the futility of prayer, in respect both to the realization of our desires concerning events of the external world, and also to the inner world, for perfecting oneself.

I am afraid that owing to my own fault you will not understand me as I would wish, and I will add here, therefore, some thoughts on the subject of prayer.

One cannot pray for external events, such as that it might rain, or that an individual loved by me might remain alive, or that I should keep healthy and not die, for these events occur according to laws established by God once for all, and so established that if we act as we should they are always beneficial. It is just the same as if a good man has built a house with substantial walls and roof, which shelter me, and I capriciously desire to enlarge or alter the position of the walls, and ask for this.

As to one's inner perfection, one cannot pray for this, because everything necessary for it has been given us and it is neither possible nor needful to add anything more.

But because petitionary prayer has no meaning, it does not follow that one cannot or should not pray. On the contrary, I believe it is impossible to live well

without prayer, and that prayer is the necessary condition of a good, peaceful, and happy life. The Gospels indicate how one should pray, and what prayer should consist of.

In every man there is the divine spark, the Spirit of God. Every man is the son of God. Prayer consists in calling forth in oneself the divine element while renouncing all that is of this world, all which can distract one's feelings. (Mohammedans do very well when they shut their eyes and ears with their fingers on entering their mosques or beginning to pray.) The best method is the one Jesus teaches: to enter alone into one's chamber and lock the door; *i.e.*, to pray in complete solitude, whether in a room, a wood, or a field.

Prayer consists in renouncing all that is of this world, external, and evoking in oneself the divine part of one's soul by throwing oneself into it, entering by it communion with Him of whom It is a part; recognizing oneself as the slave of God; and testing oneself, one's actions, one's desires, according to the demands not of the external circumstances of the world but of this divine part of one's soul.

And such prayer is not an idle sentimentality and excitement, such as is produced by public prayer with its accompaniments of singing, images, illuminations, and exhortations — but is always a help to life, reforming and directing it.

Such a prayer is a confession, a test of one's past actions, and an indication of the direction of one's future actions. Suppose I have been insulted and have an ill-feeling toward the man, and desire evil to him, or do not wish to do him the good I could; or else suppose I have lost my property, or a dear one; or am living and acting not in accordance with my faith. If I do not pray in the right way, but continue to live superficially, I shall not be delivered from the painful feeling of ill-will to the one who has insulted me. So also the loss of property or of the dear one will poison my life. And preparing to act contrary to the demands of my conscience, I shall

feel uneasy. But if I test myself before my soul and before God, all will change. I shall condemn *myself*, not my enemy, and shall search for an opportunity of doing good to him; my losses I shall accept as a trial, and try to bear submissively. And thus I shall find consolation, and shall see my way clearer for my actions; shall not, as before, conceal from myself the inconsistency between my life and my faith, but shall endeavor with repentance to bring them into harmony; and in this effort I shall find peace and joy.

But, you ask, in what should prayer consist? Jesus has given us a model prayer in "Our Father," and this prayer, reminding us of the essence of our life (which consists in being in accordance with the will of the Father and obeying it), and of our most usual sins: condemnation, or not forgiving one's brothers; and above all, of the dangers or snares of our lives — this remains until the present time the best prayer, and the most complete, of all which I know.

But besides this prayer, true solitary prayer also consists of all which in the words of other wise and righteous men, or in one's own, brings the soul back to the consciousness of its divine source, to a more vivid and clear expression of the demands of one's conscience, *i.e.*, of one's divine nature. Prayer is a test of one's present and past actions according to the highest demands of the soul.

So that I not only do not reject solitary prayer, which reestablishes the divinity of the soul, but I regard it on the contrary as a necessary condition of spiritual (true) life. I reject petitionary prayer and public prayer with its singing, images, candles, and even theatricalities, as sacrilegious. I often wonder how this public and petitionary prayer can exist among men calling themselves Christians, when Jesus clearly and definitely said that one should pray in solitude, and that you should not ask for anything, because before you open your mouth "Your Father in heaven knoweth what ye need."

As to myself I will say — without at all thinking that this is good for all, and that all ought to do so — that I have long ago contracted the habit of praying in solitude every morning, and that this my daily prayer is as follows: —

*Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name.* And after this I add, from the Gospel of John: Thy name is love, God is love. He who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. No man hath seen God anywhere, but if we love one another then He abides in us, and His love is fulfilled in us. If any man say “I love God” but hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? Brothers, let us love one another; love is from God, and every man that loveth is from God and knoweth God, because God is love.

*Thy Kingdom Come.* And I add: Seek ye the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all the rest will be added unto you. The Kingdom of God is within you.

*Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.* And here I ask myself whether I really believe that I am in God and God in me? And do I believe that my life consists in increasing love in myself? I ask, do I remember that to-day I am alive, and to-morrow dead? Is it true that I do not wish to live for personal desires and human glory, but only for the fulfilment of the will of God? And I add the words of Jesus from the three Gospels: Not my will, but Thine; and not what I desire but what Thou desirest. And not as I desire but as Thou desirest.

*Give us this day our daily bread.* I add: My food consists in doing the will of Him that sent me, and completing it. Deny thyself, take up thy cross for each day, and follow me. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and humble in heart, and you will find peace for your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

*And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin*

*against us.* I add: And your Father will not forgive you your sins unless each one of you forgive his brother who has sinned against him.

*And lead us not into temptation.* I add: Beware of the temptations of the flesh, of ambition, of ill-will, of gluttony, adultery, human glory. Do not give your alms before men, but so that your right hand does not know what your left is doing. And he is not meet for the kingdom of God who having taken the plow looks back. Rejoice when thou art abused and humiliated.

*But deliver us from evil.* I add: Beware of what issues from the heart: evil thoughts, murders (every ill-will toward men), thefts (profiting by what one has not earned), adultery (even in thought), false witness, slander.

I conclude the prayer again with the words of the Gospel of John: "And we know that we have passed from death into life if we love our brother. He that loveth not his brother has not eternal life abiding in him."

So do I daily pray, adapting the words of this prayer to my actions and my spiritual state.

But besides this prayer I pray when I am alone with myself. I read the thoughts of wise and righteous men, not only Christian and not only ancient; and reflect, searching out before God the evil in my heart, and trying to extract it. I also endeavor to pray during the daily round of my life when I am with men, and passions are getting hold of me. It is in these cases I try to recall to mind all that took place in my soul during my solitary prayer; and the more sincere that prayer was, the easier it is to refrain from evil.

This is all I wished to tell you about prayer, in order that you should not think I reject it.



**TO A MEMBER OF A RUSSIAN PROVINCIAL SCHOOL BOARD**

*(June 20, 1900)*

WHEN I taught in schools I had not then elucidated my relation to the teaching of the Church, but not attributing importance to this I avoided speaking of it to the pupils and instead read to them the Bible narratives and the Gospels, directing their attention chiefly to the moral teaching, and always answering sincerely the questions put to me.

If I was asked about the miracles I said that I did not believe in them.

But at the present time, having suffered much in the search for truth and guidance in life, I have come to the conviction that our Church teaching is an unscrupulous and pernicious falsehood and that instructing children in it is the greatest of crimes.

To tell a child who comes to me, an old man, in its search for help and indication as to how it should understand its life, the Source of life, and its relation to this Source and to the Universe, — to tell this child that God created the world and Adam in six days six thousand years ago and then rested, and that Adam sinned, and that in order to mend matters it was necessary to send God's Son into the world so that he could be killed; to tell him all those terrible blasphemous assertions of the Church which definitely destroy in the child all possibility of a conception of God as the Spirit of Love and Source of Life and instil into him horrible ideas of vengeance, temptation, reward, punishment, of the impossibility of improving oneself by one's own efforts, and all the other Church falsehoods which seem to be purposely invented to deprave the child's pure mind and heart, — to say this to a child inquiring for the truth is a most terrible crime, worse than physical violation. Thus I now look upon the teaching of the Church doctrine.

But notwithstanding my complete conviction of this

I would even now refrain, if I were a teacher, from imparting this conviction to the children, out of respect for their liberty and that of their parents, who regard this falsehood as sacred truth. But although I would avoid direct allusion to this, as formerly, every time the children appealed to me with the question I would quite truthfully tell them all I think about it.

And this is what I do at present with grown-up people and children.

Truth is always sacred. And nowhere is the transgression of its sanctity so criminal as in education: "God should be served in spirit and in truth," "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

So all I can say in answer to your question is: Regard it as your sacred duty always to speak the truth when answering the religious questions of pupils, and yet avoid thrusting any religious views upon them.

And if you yourself have not yet arrived at clear answers to the questions try to work them out, at first for yourself and then for them. And if you don't know, then say you do not know.

And this reply will be not only more fruitful than one gathered from the Catechism, but the reply "I do not know" will be sacred because it is true; whereas a reply from the Catechism will be a crime because it is the production of the Father of Lies, according to the word of the Gospel.

## ON THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG

(1900)

FROM the time, twenty years ago, when I first clearly perceived how happily mankind should and might live, and how senselessly they torment themselves and ruin generation after generation, I have kept removing further and further back the fundamental cause of this folly and ruin.

At first, fallacious economic organizations appeared

to be the cause ; then State coercion, which upholds these organizations ; whereas I have now come to the conviction that the fundamental cause of it all is the erroneous religious teaching transmitted by education.

We have become so accustomed to the religious lie that surrounds us that we do not notice all the atrocity, stupidity, and cruelty with which the theology of the Orthodox Church is permeated. *We* do not notice it, but children do, and their souls are irreparably maimed by this teaching. We have but clearly to understand what we are really doing, when we teach children this so-called religion, in order to be appalled by the dreadful crime thus perpetrated.

A pure, innocent, and as yet undeceived and undeceiving child comes to you, to one who has experience of life, and who possesses, or might possess, all the knowledge now accessible to mankind — and inquires about those fundamental truths by which man should be guided in life. And how do we answer him? Very often, indeed, we do not answer but anticipate his questions, so that he may be provided with an incited answer ready for the time when his question arises.

We answer his question with a coarse, incoherent, stupid, and, above all, cruel Jewish legend, which we repeat either in its original form or, worse still, in our own words. We tell him — assuring him that this is the sacred truth — something which, as we are well aware, is impossible, and has for us no meaning : that six thousand years ago some strange being, which we call God, bethought itself of creating a world, and created it and man ; man sinned, and for this the cruel God punished him and all of us, and then redeemed us from Himself by the death of His Son, also God ; and that our chief object is to propitiate this God and liberate ourselves from the sufferings to which He has condemned us.

We imagine that there is no harm in this, and even that it is useful to the child ; and we listen with pleasure as he repeats all these horrors, and do not realize the dreadful distortion — imperceptible to us because it is

spiritual — that is thereby taking place in the child's soul. We think that the soul of a child is a clear board on which we may write all we choose.

But this is not the case. The child has a vague idea of that Source of all, that cause of his existence, that force in whose power he finds himself, and he possesses the elevated idea of this source — indefinite and inexpressible in words, but of which his whole being is conscious — natural to all rational men. And suddenly, instead of this, he is told that this source is naught else than some sort of personal, self-willed, and dreadful evil being — the Jewish God.

The child has a vague, but correct, idea of the object of this life, which he sees is happiness, to be attained by loving communion among men. Instead of this, he is told that the general object of life is the caprice of a whimsical God, and that the personal aim of each individual is the liberation of himself from eternal punishment — sufferings earned by some one, which God has laid upon all.

Every child also has the consciousness that the duties of man lie in the region of morality. Instead of this, he is told that his duties consist principally in blind faith, in prayers, — the uttering of certain words at certain hours, — and in swallowing a decoction of bread and wine meant to represent the flesh and blood of God ; to say nothing of *ikons*, miracles, immoral Bible stories — given as examples of conduct — and the Gospel miracles, with all the immoral meaning that has been attached to the Gospel narrative. Just as though, from the cycle of folklore about various mythical heroes, some one were to construct a complete teaching of life, and were to present this to children as rational history.

It seems unimportant to us, and yet the teaching to children of this so-called religion which is taking place among us is the most dreadful crime we can possibly imagine. Torture, murder, the violation of children, are nothing in comparison with this crime.

The Government, the ruling classes, those in power, stand in need of this fraud ; their power is inseparably

united with it; consequently the ruling classes always insist on this fraud being imposed upon children, and maintained in grown-up people by strenuous hypnotism. Whereas those who desire, not the maintenance of the present false social organization, but, on the contrary, its reform, and, above all, those who desire the welfare of the children with whom they come in contact, should endeavor with all their might to deliver children from this dreadful fraud.

Therefore the utter indifference of the young to religious questions, and the negation of all religious forms, even though not replaced by any positive religious instruction, is still incomparably better than the Judaico-ecclesiastical theology, be it in ever so perfected a form.

It appears to me that for any one who has once understood the significance of imparting false teaching as sacred truth there can be no question as to what he should do, even though he possess no positive religious convictions to transmit to the child. If I know that a deception is a deception, then under no possible circumstances may I tell a child, who guilelessly, trustfully questions me, that a deceit, evident to me, is the sacred truth. It would be better if I could answer truthfully all those questions that are so untruthfully answered by the Church. But, if I cannot do this, still I must avoid giving out as truth an evident lie, knowing indubitably that from adherence to truth nothing but good can result. Besides, it is not true that a man can be without anything to say to a child in the way of the positive religious truth professed by him. Every sincere man knows *that* good principle for which he lives. Let him communicate that to the child, or let him demonstrate it to him, and he will do good to the child, and will certainly not injure it.

I have written a book called "The Christian Teaching,"<sup>1</sup> in which I desired to express as simply and clearly as possible what it is I believe. The book has turned out to be unsuitable for children, though it was precisely

<sup>1</sup> To be had of THE FREE AGE PRESS, post free, 1½d.; 64 pp.

children I had in view when I wrote it. If I now had to transmit to a child the substance of the religious teaching I consider true, I should say to him : that we have come into this world and live in it, not according to our own will, but according to the will of that which we call God, and that it is well with us, therefore, only when we fulfil this will. This will is, that we should all be happy ; and for all to be happy there is but one means : each must act toward others as he would wish that they should act toward him.

As to the questions about how the world came into existence, and what awaits us after death, I would answer to the first by the acknowledgment of my ignorance, and of the anomaly of such a question (in the Buddhist world no such question exists); and to the second I would answer by the conjecture that the will of Him who called us into this life for our welfare leads us somewhere through death — probably for the same purpose.

### TO A PRIVATE FRIEND, ON SUICIDE

(1898)

THE question, "Has a man in general the right to kill himself?" is incorrectly put. There can be no question of "right." If he is able to do it, then he has the right. I think that the possibility of killing oneself is a safety-valve. Having it, man has no right (here the expression "right" is appropriate) to say that life is unbearable. If it were impossible to live, then one would kill oneself ; and consequently one cannot speak of life as being unbearable. The possibility of killing himself has been given to man, and therefore he may (he has the right to) kill himself, and he continually uses this right — when he kills himself in duels, in war, by dissipation, wine, tobacco, opium, etc. The question can only be as to whether it is reasonable and moral (the reasonable and moral always coincide) to kill one-

self. No, it is unreasonable; as unreasonable as to cut off the shoots of a plant which one wishes to destroy: it will not die, but will merely grow irregularly.

Life is indestructible; it is beyond time and space, therefore death can only change its form, arrest its manifestation in this world. But having arrested it in this world, I, firstly, do not know whether its manifestation in another world will be more pleasant to me; and, secondly, I deprive myself of the possibility of experiencing and acquiring by my *ego* all that could be acquired in this world. Besides this, and above all, it is unreasonable because, by arresting my life owing to its apparent unpleasantness, I hereby show that I have a perverted idea of the object of my life, assuming that its object is my pleasure; whereas its object is, on the one hand, personal perfection, and, on the other, the service of that work which is being accomplished by the whole life of the Universe. It is for the same reason that suicide is also immoral. Life in its entirety, and the possibility of living until natural death, have been given to man only on the condition that he serve the life of the Universe. But, having profited by life so long as it was pleasant, he refuses to serve the Universe as soon as life becomes unpleasant; whereas, in all probability, his service commenced precisely when life began to appear unpleasant. All work appears at first unpleasant.

In the Optin Monastery, for more than thirty years, there lay on the floor a monk smitten with paralysis, who had the use of his left hand only. The doctors said that he was sure to suffer much, but not only did he refrain from complaining of his position, but incessantly making the sign of the cross, and looking at the *ikons*, he smilingly expressed his gratitude to God and joy in that spark of life which flickered in him. Tens of thousands of visitors came to see him; and it is difficult to imagine all the good which flowed into the world through this man, though deprived of the possibility of any activity. Certainly he did more good than thousands and thousands of healthy people who

imagine that in various institutions they are serving the world.

While there is life in man he can perfect himself, and serve the Universe. But he can serve the Universe only by perfecting himself, and perfect himself only by serving the Universe.

TO THE RUSSIAN MINISTERS OF THE INTERIOR AND OF  
JUSTICE

(April 20, 1896)

DEAR SIR,—I address you as man to man, with feelings of respect and good-will, in which feelings I beg you also to accept my letter. Only with sincere feelings of this kind are mutual understanding and agreement possible. The matter about which I write concerns the persecutions endured at the hands of the officials of your Department by those persons who possess certain writings of mine which are prohibited in Russia, and lend them to others who desire to read them. As far as I know many different persons have been subjected to such persecutions. One of the last cases was that of a woman doctor of Tula, Miss N—, who was searched, put into prison, and is now being cross-examined by the Public Prosecutor, accused of spreading my writings.

This case of Miss N—, a woman no longer young, of weak health, exceedingly nervous, highly respected for her fine nature, and who has gained the universal love of all who know her, is especially striking. The occasion arose from the following circumstance: Miss N— is well known to me and is a friend of my daughter. A workman in Tula had written to me several times asking for the loan of my book, "What I Believe." Not having a copy at my disposal and not knowing the man, I left several of his letters without answering. But having again received a letter from him this winter with the same request, I transmitted it to my daughter, asking her to send him the book he



desired if she had it. My daughter not having a copy, but remembering that in the same town (Tula) from which he wrote Miss N—— was living, who possessed some of my prohibited writings, she sent her card to the applicant, requesting that a copy of one of these books should be given to the bearer on presentation to Miss N——. This card, which was discovered, served as the occasion for the arrest of Miss N——, and of all the persecutions to which she was submitted.

I think that measures of this kind are unreasonable, useless, cruel, and above all unjust. They are unreasonable because there neither is nor can be any reason why Miss N—— was alone chosen as a victim out of those thousands of people who have my prohibited writings and lend them. They are useless because they do not attain any end; they do not succeed in checking anything, as the evil they are supposed to check continues amongst thousands of people, all of whom it is not possible to arrest and keep in prisons. They are cruel, because for many weak and nervous individuals, such as Miss N——, police raids, cross-examinations, and especially imprisonment may be the causes of severe nervous complaints (which was the case with Miss N——), and even of death. But, above all, these measures are in the highest degree unjust because they are not directed against the person from whom emanates the activity which the Government regards as evil.

In the present case I am this person. I write these books, and in personal intercourse spread those views which the Government regards as evil; and therefore if the Government desires to counteract the development of this evil, it should direct against me all the measures it now applies against those who casually come under its influence, and who are to blame only because they possess the prohibited books which interest them and lend them to their acquaintances. The Government should act thus for this reason also, that I not only do not conceal this activity of mine, but categorically, by this very letter, declare that I wrote and circulated

those books which the Government regards as pernicious, and still continue to write and circulate in books and letters and conversations similar ideas to those expressed in the books.

The essence of these ideas is, that the unmistakable law of God has been revealed to men, that this law stands higher than all the human laws, and that, in accordance with this law, we should not be in enmity with nor coerce each other, but, on the contrary, should help each other — should act with others as we would wish others to act with us.

These are the thoughts, with the practical inferences they imply, which I have expressed as well as I could in my books and am now endeavoring to express yet more clearly and simply in the book I am now writing. I express the same thoughts in conversations, and in the letters I write to people I know and to those I do not know. I express the same thoughts to you now also, indicating the acts of cruelty and violence contrary to the law of God which are perpetrated by officials of your Department.

The words uttered by Gamaliel regarding the dissemination of the Christian teaching: "If this work be of men, it will come to naught. But if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" — these words constitute a lesson of *true* governmental wisdom in its relations to the manifestations of spiritual activity of men. If this activity be false it will fall of itself, whereas if it contains the work of God — such as the work of God in our age, that is the substitution of the principle of rational love in the place of violence — then no external efforts can either hasten or retard its fulfilment. If the Government allows the unchecked dissemination of these views they will spread slowly and equably; if the Government, as it does now, subjects to persecution those who have accepted these thoughts and are transmitting them to others, then the dissemination will diminish among timid, weak, and hesitating people precisely to the degree in which it will augment among strong, energetic, and convinced people.

And therefore the process of the dissemination of the work will not stop, and will be neither retarded nor hastened by any means the Government adopts.

This, in my opinion, is the general and immutable law of the spreading of truth, and therefore the wisest thing the Government can do in its relation to the expression of ideas it regards as undesirable, consists in undertaking nothing, and especially in not employing such unworthy, cruel, and obviously unjust measures as the torture of innocent people because they do things which have been done by tens of thousands of other men whom no one persecutes for this.

If, however, the Government wishes at all costs not to remain inactive, but to punish, threaten, and suppress that which it regards as evil, then the least irrational and the least unjust course it could take would be to direct all measures of punishment, intimidation, and suppression against that which the Government regards as the source of the evil, *i.e.*, against me; the more so as I declare beforehand that I will, unceasingly, until my death, continue to do that which the Government regards as evil, and which I regard as my sacred duty before God.

And please do not think that in asking you to direct against me the measures used against some of my acquaintances I imagine that their application to me would create any kind of difficulty to the Government — that my popularity or my social position protects me from police raids, cross-examinations, exile, imprisonment, and other severer acts of violence. I not only do not think so, but am persuaded that if the Government were to act vigorously with me, to exile me, imprison me, or apply a yet more extreme measure, this would not create any particular difficulty, and that public opinion would not only not be revolted, but the majority would completely approve of such action, and say that it should have been done long ago.

God is my witness that in writing this letter I am not surrendering to a desire for bravado, or to show off in some way, but am prompted by a moral demand, which

consists in relieving innocent people of responsibility for actions committed by me ; and, above all, of indicating to the representatives of the Government, and to you in their number, the cruelty, unreasonableness, and injustice of the measures you use, and of asking you, as far as possible, to cease them, and to free yourself from the moral responsibility they involve.

I should be very glad if you were to answer me in a simple unofficial letter as to your thoughts about what I have expressed, and whether you will fulfil my request to transfer for the future all persecutions, if so it be they are regarded as necessary, to me, the principal person from the governmental point of view who deserves them.

With the feeling of true good-will, I remain, — Yours respectfully.